DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 239 496 FL 014 179

AUTHOR Voght, Geoffrey M., Ed.
TITLE Proceedings of the 1983 EMU Conference on Foreign Languages for Business (Ypsilanti, Michigan, April 7-9, 1983). Part IV: Course Components and Teaching Techniques.
INSTITUTION Eastern Michigan Univ., Ypsilanti. Dept. of Foreign Languages and Bilingual Studies.
PUB DATE Apr 83
NOTE 164p.; For related documents, see FL 014 176-182.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC07 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Business Administration Education; Business Correspondence; Classroom Techniques; *College Second Language Programs; Cross Cultural Studies; Cultural Education; Economic Climate; Educational Strategies; Faculty Development; Higher Education; *Industry; Language Proficiency; Languages for Special Purposes; Language Teachers; Measurement Techniques; *Program Design; School Business Relationship; Second Language Instruction; Testing
IDENTIFIERS Stock Market

ABSTRACT

A collection of nine papers from the fourth part of the conference on the applications of foreign language and international studies to business addresses the issue of program and instructional design. The papers include: "Program Design, Lesson Planning and Strategies for Foreign Language Business Courses: An Overview" (Ronald Cere), "The Importance of the Commercial Document in Teaching Foreign Language for Business" (Carolyn L. Jacobs), "Business Correspondence in a Foreign Language Made Easy and Fun to Teach" (Denise Guback), "The Stockmarket in Foreign Language Classes for Business" (Alois Zeit), "Training of Language Educators for Business Language Courses" (Maude S. Walther), "Teaching Culture to Business Students: An Anthropological Approach" (Carolyn V. Bell), "The Language Teacner as Cross-Cultural Trainer: Approaches" (William Schwab), "The Language Teacher as Cross-Cultural Trainer: Topics" (Lucinda Hart-Gonzalez), and "Defining and Measuring Foreign Language Proficiency in Programs for Business" (David V. Hiple and Kathryn Buck). Two appendices to the last article contain extensive material on proficiency standards. (MSE)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED239496

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 1983 EMU CONFERENCE ON FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR BUSINESS

(April 7-9, 1983)

PART IV: COURSE COMPONENTS AND TEACHING TECHNIQUES

Prepared

and

With an Introduction

by

The Conference Chairman:

Dr. Geoffrey M. Voght
Associate Professor of Spanish
Department of Foreign Languages and Bilingual Studies
Assistant Program Director
Language and International Trade Programs
Eastern Michigan University
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

FL014179

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

G. Voght

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

INTRODUCTION

The 1983 Eastern Michigan University Conference on Foreign Languages for Business, held on the EMU campus in Ypsilanti, attracted approximately 300 people from all 50 states of the USA and several foreign countries. There were over 70 presentations by speakers coming from 35 states and several foreign countries. This gathering was, to my knowledge, the first time that so many foreign language educators and other interested individuals had met to exchange ideas and experiences related to language and cultural studies applied to business. It was our primary effort, as members of the Department of Foreign Languages and Bilingual Studies at EMU, to reach out to the profession, sharing our expertise and facilitating the dissemination of information nationwide on this new direction in foreign language and international education. We are proud to be a part of what we believe is both a significant educational revitalization and a development crucially important to our nation's future.

The papers in this volume are varied and unequal in length and quality. They do share, however, one vital thing in common: they represent the attempt of professionals to come to grips with the problems of creating a new academic specialization and of integrating these innovations into the time-honored traditional curriculum in foreign languages at our institutions of higher education, which have focused almost exclusively in the past on languages and literatures. Much thinking remains to be done, but one thing seems fairly clear now: the struggle between the new and the old will be resolved very differently

at different institutions, depending on the mission of each school. Some colleges and universities will not develop any courses in this new area of specialization, while at others the traditional literature and advanced linguistics courses will be sacrificed entirely in favor of language studies applied to business and the professions. Between these two extremes will lie a full panorama of different proportions in the integration of the new and the traditional. In this diversity among our educational institutions there lies great strength. It is my opinion that there is a great need for both types of language studies. I see a great need for institutions specializing in the traditional areas of academic scholarship as well as for those focusing on the new applications for language and cultural expertise.

Personally I do not acknowledge any necessary incompatibility between traditional literary investigation, for example, and the study of the language of business and commercial practices in foreign cultures. Both of these concentrations seem to be complementary aspects of a larger whole, the interest in the diverse cultures and peoples which make up this increasingly small world. Both specializations can serve to increase intercultural understanding, sensitivity and cooperation. Both can help us live more peacefully with our world neighbors, in our increasingly complex and interdependent global economy.

I am very grateful to the National Institute of Education (U.S. Department of Education) for maintaining the Educational Resources Information Center. My special thanks to Dr. John Clark, Director of

Foreign Languages at the Center of Applied Linguistics, and to John Brosseau, Acquisitions Coordinator for the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics, for helping make it possible for the papers from this conference to be available to a broader audience.

To all who read these words, may you find something of interest and value in these pages.

Geoffrey M. Voght
January 12, 1984

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 1983 EMU

CONFERENCE ON FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR BUSINESS

(April 7-9, 1983)

PART IV: COURSE COMPONENTS AND TEACHING TECHNIQUES 409

31. "Program Design, Lesson Planning and Strategies for Foreign Language Business Courses: An Overview," by Dr. Ronald Cere (University of Nebraska) 410

32. "The Importance of the Commercial Document in Teaching Foreign Language for Business," by Dr. Carolyn L. Jacobs (Houston Community College System). 446

33. "Business Correspondence in a Foreign Language Made Easy and Fun to Teach," by Denise Guback (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) 460

34. "The Stockmarket in Foreign Language Classes for Business," by Alois Zeit (The University of Michigan-Flint) 467

35. "Training of Language Educators for Business Language Courses," by Dr. Maude S. Walther (Purdue University) 480

36. "Teaching Culture to Business Students: An Anthropological Approach," by Dr. Carolyn V. Bell (Buena Vista College) 485

37. "The Language Teacher as Cross-Cultural Trainer: Approaches," by Professor William Schwab (Oakland University) 492

38. "The Language Teacher as Cross-Cultural Trainer: Topics," by Lucinda Hart-González (Oakland University) 501

39. "Defining and Measuring Foreign Language Proficiency in Programs for Business," by David V. Hiple (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) and Kathryn Buck (Carl Duisberg Society) 511

PROGRAM DESIGN, LESSON PLANNING AND STRATEGIES FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE BUSINESS COURSES: AN OVERVIEW

by

Dr. Ronald Cere

Department of Modern Languages and Literatures
1111 Old Father
University of Nebraska
Lincoln, Nebraska 68502

Program Design, Lesson Planning and Strategies for Foreign Language Business Courses: An Overview

Ronald Cere

Ever since President Carter's Commission reported on the woeful status of foreign language study in the U.S., efforts have been made to publicize this situation and steps taken to deal with it.[1] Sepcifically, articles and books have been written about the need for bilingual and multilingual personnel, reports and studies undertaken to show the importance of languages in American life, and surveys conducted to confirm all of the above. Also, conferences, like the present one, have been held to discuss relevant issues and exchange ideas, and special programs created to begin to meet the learners' needs. To be sure, most of this activity has been aimed at foreign language study for special purposes, but, particularly, it has been directed at one sector: business. As the Commission indicated, the latter is the sector for which foreign language capability is most urgent and most desirable. It is also the sector in which educators have begun to take great interest and for which they have expended much time and energy in trying to develop those programs which will serve it best. While their successes have been respectable, they have not adequately treated several areas of concern crucial to the success of both the program and its clientele. These are the type of course, approach, learning systems and strategies to be used in foreign language business programs.

This paper proposes to treat these concerns. It will undertake 1)to outline a program design for foreign language business courses based on existing models; 2)to provide and discuss sample syllabi and lesson plans currently in use; 3)to examine various learning systems already or in the process of being developed; and 4)to describe some possible strategies that can be implemented

in the classroom. Throughout the presentation emphasis will be placed on defining objectives, content areas, instructional formats and learning and teaching techniques and on defining the role of the instructor and student. Moreover, a special effort will be made to include those items of interest and of use to all teachers of foreign language business courses. With this in mind, let us proceed with the business of language for business.

Before any designing, lesson-planning or strategy-making can be done for foreign language business courses, the type of program to be instituted must be ascertained. The person or persons charged with the course of study must determine, among other things, the objectives, structure and content areas, and they must decide the instructional format and methods required. They must also select or develop the necessary material and plan the appropriate activities. Above all, they must identify their clientele (students, professionals), the latter's needs (oral, writing skills, etc.), and professional areas (accounting, import-export, secretarial, marketing, etc.) and they must confront the problems of entry and course requirements as well as instructional level. One of the most efficacious ways of obtaining this information is via a needs assessment, or, if you will, a marketing survey. Such a survey, if constructed properly, will yield the data necessary to begin organizing the most suitable program. Without going into detail as to how this instrument is designed and implemented, let us take a look at the findings of two fairly recent surveys.

The first survey we will mention was conducted at Hamilton College in New York in 1981.[2] Its objective was to ascertain which foreign language skills of French were important and valuable to the business world. Approximately 250 letters of inquiry were mailed to firms doing business overseas and several to French companies with branches in the U.S. The findings were reveal-

ing. All who responded agreed that overall skill in comprehending and communicating were far more important than the mastery of technical vocabulary or commercial procedures, and many argued that an understanding of the psychology of the French-speaking person was as important as a knowledge of the language. Most went on to suggest that the course make extensive use of periodicals, films, and personal contacts with French-speaking people to bridge the cultural gap and improve aural-oral skills and that role-playing and other real-life business activities be undertaken to simulate the commercial environment.[3] On the basis of these findings, the instructor, who made the inquiries, designed a course of "Career Skills in French" to respond to these demands.

The most comprehensive study of the foreign language requirements of the business, and the second survey to be discussed here, was that undertaken in 1978 as a doctoral dissertation at the University of Texas at Austin by Marianne E. Inman.[4] In her thesis, Inman examined corporate language training programs as well as the role of translation and interpreting in the business environment. During her investigations, which included a survey of 267 American firms, she discovered many interesting facts relevant to program designing for language business courses. Among other things, she learned that corporations were looking for personnel who had a business or technical background and who were conversant in one or more languages. Corporations, she reported, were seeking professionals who could 1)translate promotional and technical literature, including users' manuals, brochures, instructional materials into and from English; 2)write business letters and related documents, especially contracts; and 3)communicate or serve as interpreter for a wide variety of business and social meetings, involving technical and commercial use of the language.[5] She also noted that most firms underscored the need for understanding cultural differences, especially as they related to values, customs, and busi-

ness practices, and especially stressed[6] the economic, political, geographical and social realities of the host countries. Like the takers of other surveys, however, Inman indicated the corporations' interest in combining foreign language study with courses in the business and technical fields.[7]

Similar inquiries concerning the foreign language needs of the business world have been made by other institutions and individuals.[8] Generally, they confirm what the aforementioned studies have indicated, that is, that with regard to program design, such courses should consist of several well-integrated components which reflect the linguistic, cultural, professional and personal needs of its clientele. More specifically, they should 1)emphasize all language skills, but, particularly, speaking and listening, to develop the student's ability to function in a variety of business and social situations; 2)dedicate a segment to the translation, from English into the foreign language and vice versa, of professional and technical writings (documents, manuals, brochures, etc.), with some exercises in oral interpreting to help present and future personnel acquire skills sorely needed by multinational corporations; 3)devote another segment to the composition of letters and related documents frequently used in business to give the learner both reading and writing practice in each; 4)dramatize or simulate orally, preferably with native speakers, business and social situations commonly encountered abroad or in international contexts at home, so that professionals can interface more effectively with foreign nationals; 5)incorporate pertinent readings from specialized texts or journals (newspapers, magazines, etc.) that will treat the past and present geographic, economic, political, social and legal realities of the foreign countries so that students will gain a broader knowledge of both business and life in these lands; and 6)integrate a component of small "c" culture stressing attitudes, values, customs, life styles and business

practices to make personnel aware of and sensitive to the cultural, business, and psychological idiosyncrasies of the foreign nations and their peoples.

While these are the components which the surveys cite as essential to the structuring of any foreign language business programs, they are not the only ones necessary for the successful preparation and realization of such courses. Based on both the published comments of instructors in the field and the research and experience of the present author, the following elements should also be added: 1)a section on business and technical terminology, so students can familiarize themselves with the most common words; 2)a segment for the discussion of the various fields comprising the commercial world--especially in management, marketing, sales, finance, accounting, secretarial, etc.--,[9] to let learners use previous acquired terminology as they gain an insight into the concepts, characteristics, and workings of each area; 3)a review of those grammatical items frequently employed in business and related contexts to improve the students' overall linguistic knowledge;[10] and 4)an internship program abroad or at home with a firm involved in international trade so that potential professionals can utilize this experience in a real-life commercial environment. These components, together with those mentioned above and the appropriate instructional materials, will provide the most comprehensive and effective course of study for students planning a foreign language-related business career and will meet most of their needs. Even these additional components, however, do not comprise all the elements necessary for designing such programs. Entry requirements, course level and objectives, instructional mode and format, and evaluation procedures must also be taken into account. Without going into a long theoretical discussion of what they are or how they can be ascertained, let us examine several existing courses which have considered these factors and about which several articles have been written.

One of the first foreign language business courses to provide a formal program design and to be written about was the Commercial French course instituted at Eastern Michigan University in 1976. Developed by Professor Brigitte Muller as a result of an earlier successful independent study of Secretarial French and participation in an intensive seminar of commercial French, the course based its objectives, content format, and instructional mode on the requirements for the Diplôme de Français Commercial, a diploma awarded upon passing the Paris Chamber of Commerce examinations for non-native speakers of French. Briefly, it proposed: 1) to provide the student with a knowledge of commercial terminology in French; 2) to enable him or her to communicate in the latter, both orally and in writing for various business situations and undertakings, including correspondence; and 3) to familiarize the learner with the general and economic geography of France; and 4) to acquaint the future professional with the procedures, workings, and realities of the French business world.[11] Content-wise it consisted of vocabulary study, letter-writing, readings and reports on the economic geography of France, as well as translations, dictations and grammar review, and compared the economies and business procedures used in France and the United States. Format-wise, it was a three-credit semester course and was divided into two parts. The first part focused on commercial vocabulary, procedures and correspondence, while the second part dealt with dictations, oral and written translations and reports on business-related subjects. Economic geography was also covered in the second half of each class session for the entire term and extensive use was made of audio-visuals and of magazines such as L'Espansión, Le Monde and L'Express. Prerequisites for the course were advanced classes of French syntax, conversation, civilization, and diction, as well as a course of Business Education in English.[12] The results of this introductory course, particularly vis-à-vis the Chamber Exams, were

very positive: of the seven candidates who took the latter, six passed and two received la Mention bien (cum laude).

Shortly after the French Business program was instituted at EMU, several others began to emerge, including one in German at Boston's Northeastern University. The Business German course, as it was titled, also had a formal program design, but differed markedly from its EMU French counterpart. Unlike the latter, and based on the findings of its own inquiries, the German course was set up as a two-semester elementary course and focused on reading competence and cultural awareness. More specifically, it aimed at providing student trainees with a basic knowledge and understanding of technical writings in German and sought to familiarize them with the business, economic, and political realities of the German states. It also attempted to upgrade general writing skills--in English--and to improve reading comprehension.[13] It realized these goals in various ways but, specifically, it:1)realigned target skill priorities to concentrate not only on "active" inferential reading of general German business texts but also on phonetically accurate sight reading and listening comprehension; 2)emphasized German commercial, economic, and political vocabulary, exploiting recognition of international and Germanic cognate words; 3)used context-based and discussion of texts in English, drawing on the case-method procedure of business study, and stressed grammar as a comprehension aid; 4)included weekly readings in English, supplemented by the regular distribution of current media reports, concentrating on commercial, economic and political conditions in the German states, and 5)developed professional-grade writing skills through detailed summaries in English of the above-mentioned readings.[14] Moreover, it utilized the reading-based program developed by Ms. Lore Armaleo-Popper of the Goethe Institute in Rome as well as selections culled from such serial publications as Deutschland-Nachrichten (German Infor-

mation Center, New York), Amerika-Handel, "Kursbrief aus USA" (German-American Chamber of Commerce), Wirtschaftsdienst (Verlag, Weltarchiv, Hamburg) and German government reports of various kinds, plus occasional newspaper articles. Like the EMU French course, this course was very successful, although its instructor suggested that many of the components of the ideal foreign language business course described above should be incorporated in more advanced-level classes.[15]

Of all the foreign language business programs conceived to date, one of the most comprehensive is that of Claus Reschke of the University of Houston. Formulated in 1976, the program sought to provide a course of business German and culture for students majoring in hotel management or business management.[16] Design-wise, it was a three-tier program which adopted a modular approach to student learning and focused on German for travellers. During the first stage, essentially a semester course, students were to learn the rudiments of German, as well as basic survival language and were to practice oral communication. They were to undertake these activities via various taped oral pattern drills and reading and listening comprehension exercises, which were all interrelated, and were to acquire proficiency in spoken and written German through integrated situational role-plays. The principal goal was communicative competence for everyday occurrences. In the second segment, also a semester course, the learners were to continue basic language training but focus on culture and the linguistic aspects of the student's professional area. They were to study, in separate modules, the socio-economic, political, and geographical realities of the German-speaking countries through readings, lectures, and oral and written reports, and were to master the vocabulary and business practices relevant to his or her field. The objectives here were the ability to understand cultural differences and to communicate effectively with German nationals. The final

segment was an internship of eight to twelve weeks in one of the German-speaking nations during which the student would work for a firm in his or her professional area while living with a German family. The aim here was the strengthening of the student's language skills and cultural knowledge via real-life and professional experiences. To ensure the success of the program, special instructional materials and learner-centered activities were to be developed for each model and a series of sophisticated evaluation procedures used to check student and program performance.[17] Although this program never left the drawing boards, others with similar goals and designs such as that at EMU have, and have done so successfully.

Two other foreign language courses which deserve mention are those in French at Northern Illinois and Wayne State Universities.[18] Developed a few years apart, both have contributed much to program and curriculum design and have much in common. With regard to entry requirements, for example, both required two years of previous language study, and the program at Northern Illinois went further and demanded 45 credits of French and 15 of Business as part of their "Translation and Business" certification.[19] They also concurred in the selection of content areas, incorporating selections on French commercial terminology, correspondence, and procedures, and both stressed the need for an awareness of cultural differences as well as for a general knowledge of business, particularly as it related to the international sector. They diverged on focus and approach, the Northern Illinois program emphasizing the acquisition of aural-oral skills and the use of the role-playing technique, and the Wayne State course concentrating on the conveying of business-related information and the employment of the lecture-letter-writing technique.[20] They both agreed, however, on the need for good instructional materials, including the appropriate audio-visual materials, and on the adoption of such texts as

Mauger's Le français commercial.[21] Like the aforementioned courses, these two were very successful.

It would seem, from what has been said thus far, that most of the language business courses have been developed in languages other than English and only at the university level. Not so. Similar programs have been undertaken in English as a Second Language and in the junior high and high schools. Indeed, two of the most interesting courses of study were those conducted through ESL programs based in the U.S. and in France.[22] Directed at non-native English-speaking executives, both programs sought to develop oral proficiency using learner-centered activities and the simulation of actual business practices and situations. The U.S. program promoted communicative competence by employing the case method utilized in business classes. The executives were asked to solve managerial problems similar to their own and to meet periodically with the instructor who, to fit into the corporate scheme of things, served as "consultant" as well as mentor. Similarly, the French program encouraged oral competence by proposing that their students act out the various phases involved in negotiating a business transaction in English. The language-training process involved in preparing the students for this direct experiential method was somewhat different and more complex than that of the U.S. project but both required that the student have a fairly good knowledge of and fluency in the language. As far as the junior high and high school programs were concerned, although more geared to career awareness than to formal language business training, they did cover certain aspects and terminology common to the commercial world, and, along with FLES programs, were considered important stepping-stones in acquiring the more sophisticated studies.[23]

Despite the fact that curriculum design is, perhaps, the most important stage in developing foreign language business courses, syllabus preparation and

lesson planning are of equal moment. To know exactly what to teach and in what sequence is a major concern to all instructors. On the basis of this careful assessment and arranging of the topics and materials to be considered, the teacher can go ahead, with confidence, and begin his or her work. Although, it has been indicated to some degree in several of the course descriptions just mentioned what these items and content areas may be, it is still difficult to pinpoint which ones are to be included in a syllabus or lesson plan given the scope and purposes of the curriculum and course. It may be that the intended program will be a course of correspondence whose goal is to familiarize students with the types of commercial letters or documents most frequently used in the business, or it could be several courses that will cover the gamut of business topics and fields. This is a determination the instructor will have to make based on the findings of a needs assessment as well as on his or her knowledge of business, remembering that the more specialized courses, such as Spanish or Japanese for Managers, require more advanced preparation in the field. However, to expedite the process of ascertaining what should be included in a foreign language business syllabus and how they should be developed in a lesson plan, let us examine some of the existing ones.

Perhaps, one of the most comprehensive syllabi designed for foreign language business courses, at least as far as content is concerned, and which is incorporated in Appendix A of this article, is that prepared by Claus Reschke of the University of Houston.[24] Created for the model Commercial German course mentioned earlier, this syllabus is based on the first semester's work and, like the course's modular format, consists of three parts. The first part is a week-by-week listing of the grammar items to be mastered by the students and covers those structures most commonly used and necessary to function in survival or everyday situations: formation of nouns and adjectives, conjugation

of regular and some irregular verbs in the simple present, past, and future tenses and in the subjunctive, uses of imperatives and negation, etc. The second section, titled "Resource Module," also gives a weekly breakdown of topics but focuses on survival language learning for use in foreign or second language contexts. Each class session centers on everyday situations encountered abroad or in a bilingual setting state-side (e.g., travelling, going shopping, ordering a meal, etc.), and is coordinated with the items covered in the grammar segment. The last part or "Situational Module" again uses the week-by-week programming motif but now completes the learning cycle by including those situations which will be role-played. These dramatizations are also coordinated with the other two "syllabi" and give the students the opportunity to use their acquired skills and knowledge actively and practically. The result: a well-coordinated and all-purpose syllabus.

Another syllabus worth mentioning, at least from a planning point of view, was that designed by Colette Verger Michael, included here as Appendix B. Adopting a more assignment-oriented format, this program guide, used in the French Business Course at Northern Illinois State, indicates the topic to be treated each week as well as the activities to be undertaken at home and in class. The latter primarily concentrates on reading and writing exercises, although, according to the article, the aural-oral skills are stressed, and are based on three texts: Mauger and Charon's Le Français commercial, Manual, Bruezière and Charon's Le Français commercial. Textes d'étude, and Clas and Horguelin's Le Français, langue des affaires, all complemented by Kettridge's French-English Dictionary of Commercial and Financial Terms. The overall objectives of this syllabus are: 1)the acquisition of communicative skills, 2)a knowledge of commercial terminology in French, and 3)a familiarity with business concepts and procedures.[25]

Although no formal syllabus for a Business Spanish program has yet been

published, I would like to propose, as Appendix C, one I have developed over the past few years at various state universities. Like the previous models, it is a topical one, organized according to a weekly schedule, and is designed for a third-year level program. Unlike the other two, it is based on a two-semester-sequenced course of study and has several extra features. In addition to listing the specific content areas to be covered, it specifies the probable formats to be used--lectures, readings, discussion, simulations, oral reports, etc.--, and provides for a culture component treating first Spain and, then, Spanish America. It also includes exams with their dates and incorporates a series of oral presentations as well as other activities to be undertaken during both semesters. More importantly, under the section "Description and Requirements," it defines the objectives, content areas, activities--including grammar review--, requirements and evaluatory procedures to be realized and stresses the learner-centered orientation of the course. Finally, the syllabus indicates the texts and other instructional materials to be used during both semesters and states the course entry requirements. All in all, a fairly comprehensive and cohesive course of study.

As far as lesson plans for foreign language business classes are concerned, several types have been designed, tried and written about, but none is as detailed as one developed for the aforementioned Spanish Business Course. Included here as Appendix D, and titled "Marketing and Market Management," it covers one day's work and incorporates many of the elements of the model foreign language business program described earlier. It begins with a statement of general objectives and is followed by a list of more specific ones. The former summarizes what the student is expected to accomplish while the latter defines more precisely the goals to be achieved for each activity undertaken. As will be noted, each aim is student-directed and focuses on the latter's

ability: 1)to improve aural skills via a dictation; 2)learn the terms commonly used in marketing; 3)to participate in a discussion on marketing concepts; 4)to carry on a conversation concerning buying and selling; 5)to understand and write a commercial letter requesting marketing information; 6)to read for comprehension and general knowledge an article about a marketing problem of Spain; 7)to complete a short grammar review exercise and translate several sentences into Spanish on marketing to improve writing skills and knowledge of the language for business contexts; and 8)to discuss and compare the food habits of Bolivians and Americans (USA). These objectives are followed by a list of materials and includes, in addition to the required texts, hand-outs and transparencies. The plan concludes with a brief list of the actual learner activities to be undertaken--a variety of aural-oral, written, and reading exercises which fulfill and correspond to the stated objectives--and specifies the sequence and time period in which they are to be carried out. In short, a comprehensive, well-integrated and compact plan of action, it seeks to address students' needs and improve the latter's language and cultural capabilities.

While program design and syllabi and lesson planning are two important stages in developing foreign language business courses, deciding the instructional and learning systems and strategies to be adopted are equally crucial considerations.[26] Regarding the type of learning or instructional methods to be used, much will depend on the objectives of the course or lesson plan as well as on the focus and approach the instructor takes. For example, if the lesson and teacher aim for a knowledge of the correspondence, procedures and practices used in the business world, concentrating on the development of the writing and cognitive skills, as is the case in the Commercial French course designed by Jacqueline Morton of Wayne State University, then the instructor will concentrate on letter-writing techniques, readings, lecture and discussion

to realize these goals. If, on the other hand, the purpose of the lesson, module, etc. is to try to achieve oral proficiency, as it seems to be in the ESL models, then the emphasis will be, though not exclusively, on such methods as audio-lingualism, role-playing and situational and other oral-oriented systems. The same will be true if the aims of the course were reading competence, translation and interpreting proficiency or merely those directed to acquiring a knowledge of cultural differences and business practices. The techniques utilized will be those most appropriate for the mastery of the particular skill or subject matter to be learned. More important than the methodology used in foreign language business classes, though at its very heart and soul, are the strategies to be employed.

Teaching strategies are perhaps the key element in any instructional program. They constitute the means for initiating the actual teaching-learning process and are at the center of all the activities undertaken and realized therein. They are also deciding factors in what knowledge or skills are to be acquired and determine, to a large extent, the success or failure of the entire process and its component parts. While many strategies have been developed and published for general language instruction, only a few have been "marketed" and written about for language business classes. The ones most mentioned, and which will be discussed here, are those employed in teaching letter-writing and oral communication for business purposes and situations.

With respect to commercial correspondence, one of the most interesting strategies is that developed by James W. Brown of Ball State University.[27] Applied to all aspects of letter-writing, it consists of several parts and is structured on the learning-packet concept used in individualized instruction. It begins with a statement of clearly defined objectives: "Upon completion of this packet, students should be able to: 1)identify some of the major differ-

ences in mailing customs between U.S. and Hispanic countries; 2)read and write mailing and return addresses; 3)read and write informal letters at the students' level of Spanish proficiency; and 4)read and write some types of business letters at the students' level of proficiency."[28] Next, a list of the most commonly used verbs is provided and the students instructed to master their past and present forms after reviewing them with their instructor. Once this phase of the teaching-learning process is successfully completed, the students are given a set of instructions explaining how they are to undertake the activities of each of the four lessons which follow. These instructions and activities focus on a reading assignment concerning the subject covered in each unit as well as on a series of self-correcting written exercises. The four lessons included are 1)Mailing customs in the U.S. and Spanish-speaking countries, 2)Addresses and Envelopes, 3)Informal letters, and 4)Business letters. The strategies used in this last lesson may be particularly useful to neophyte teachers. The author starts with the characteristics and style of commercial correspondence and describes them. He indicates that, while English business letters are short and to the point the Spanish counterparts are more formal and flowery and contain many special words and phrases, such as those used in greetings. In the next section, he gives a list of opening and closing phrases that are used for a variety of situations and provides a model business letter. He follows these explanations with a series of written exercises--letter completion, partial and full translations, etc.--, all with answers, and concludes with a letter-writing assignment to be corrected by the instructor. A learning packet which has taken into consideration all the phases of basic letter writing, it can be used to teach general business correspondence in any language for all different types of commercial correspondence.

Given the emphasis of many firms with international interests on oral

communication, the strategies for the acquisition of this skill are probably the most crucial for language business teachers. Recognizing this, though from a different instructional context, the French-based ESL program mentioned earlier, developed a somewhat novel technique for achieving oral competence for its present and future international managers. First, realizing the need to simulate a real business setting, the instructors transformed the classroom into a conference room. This created the atmosphere for motivating and preparing the students for what was to take place. Next, using a functional catalogue of 300 kernel sentences transcribed from tapes and notes made at actual business meetings, they prepared instructional materials including a tape program. For the most part, these materials were a series of oral and written exercises as well as a variety of special activities and were part of a rather complex learning system. The system itself, which was the mainspring of the entire program, was based on a mixture of several methods and approaches --audiolingual, notional functional, structural, situational, etc.--, and consisted of three stages.[29] During the first stage, the students, who were already fluent in and knowledgeable of English, making this an advanced-level program, learned the lexicon and variations of the 300 kernel phrases via oral drills that went from the most to the least mechanical and from the structurally simple to the more complex. These exercises were followed by dialogues, again based on the aforementioned phrases, and were practiced using tapes. Like the previous step, this one stressed aural-oral skills but also focused on the affective, notional, and sociolinguistic aspects of language learning. Once the dialogues were mastered, and to proceed to more unstructured conversation, guided oral exercises were undertaken. These were of the situational type and they went from the easy to the more difficult. In the final stage, students had to undertake spontaneous conversation in the conference room which approxi-

mated those encountered in real-life. These strategies, as the article in which they are described attests, helped students achieve oral competence, but more importantly, it offered them an authentic setting in which to learn. They could be used, no doubt, for similar purposes in other languages.

Some of the work done and published in the areas of program development, syllabi and lesson planning, systems of learning and teaching strategies for foreign language business classes have been revealed and discussed in this article. From the information collected and explicated it would seem that in order to construct such a program some very concrete and well-defined steps of organization and development should be undertaken. This procedure should include, in chronological order:1)a well-designed survey which will identify the specific clientele, the latter's professional and language needs, including questions regarding specific learning objectives, content areas, modes of teaching desired, and types of activities; 2)the structuring and preparation of a program and syllabus or syllabi which will reflect the findings of the needs assessment, especially those related to course requirements, level, objectives, topics and approaches; 3)the organization and development of materials, lesson plans, learning systems and teaching strategies which will help realize the needs of the students; and 4)the evaluation of all phases and aspects of the program, particularly instructor's and learner's performance, to assess areas of strengths and weaknesses and to improve overall program effectiveness. Of course, this entire procedure implies the undertaking of much research and experimentation in the non-traditional areas of language learning, particularly as it relates to content areas and instructional approaches, and even suggests that some retooling may be in order, not a bad thing in itself. At the same time, it seems to indicate the need for seeking and developing new bonds of cooperation between educators at all levels--elementary through college--and

in all related fields--business, arts, sciences, etc.--as well as new ties between education, business, government and other sectors so that the tasks at hand can be accomplished more effectively and successfully. In short, it means much time, imagination, flexibility and hard work. However, the challenges, opportunities and satisfaction (hopefully financially as well as personally and professionally) which will accrue and present themselves will more than offset the investment in such efforts. It is only hoped that, at this point in time, this article has been able to shed some light on and give direction to the most important areas of foreign language learning as well as to provide present and future teachers with some suggestions and ideas as to how they can go about organizaing their own programs.

Notes

[1] For the complete report of Commission's report see President's Commission on Foreign Languages and International Studies. Strength Through Wisdom: A Critique of U.S. Capability, Washington, D.C.: Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1979.

[2] The survey mentioned here is part of the article written by Patricia Francis Cholakian, "Commercial French: An Opportunity for Innovative Classroom Techniques," French Review, vol. 54, no. 5 (1981), 666-671.

[3] Cholokian, p. 666.

[4] Marianne E. Inman, "An Investigation of the Foreign Language Needs of U.S. Corporations Doing Business Abroad." Diss. University of Texas, Austin, 1978. (ERIC ED 166 893)

[5] Inman, pp. 50ff.

[6] Inman, p. 34.

[7] Inman, pp. 70-71.

[8] Other surveys conducted to assess the foreign language needs of the business world are cited in Peter A. Eddy, "Foreign Language Skills and Jobs," Pacific Northwest Conference on Foreign Languages, Vol. 26, part 2 (1975), 41-47.

[9] In their survey the Olympus Research Corporation of Salt Lake City, Utah defined the specific areas of the business and technical worlds are most important. Their findings are revealed in M. Rex Arnett, "Languages for the World of Work," (Paper Presented at the Meeting of American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language, Washington, D.C., November 27-29, 1975), p. 10. (ERIC 116 507) (ERIC ED 116 507)

[10] Vaucher is one proponent of this grammar-as-needed approach, insisting that only those grammatical items which cause difficulty should be reviewed.

(Marius Vaucher, "Le cour el'anglais de l'École des Hautes Études Commerciales de Lausanne est devenu un cours pluridisciplinaire." Paper presented at the Colloque de la Commission Interuniversitaire Suisse de Linguistique Appliquée, Switzerland, 1977. (ERIC ED 175 248)

[11] Brigitte D. Muller, "A Marketable Skill and an International Diploma," Foreign Language Annals, vol. 11, no. 4 (Sept. 1978), 399.

[12] Muller, p. 400.

[13] Ross D. Hall, "Business Students and Second Language Training: German for Business" in Foreign Language for the Professions: An Inter-Cultural Approach to Modern Communications. Proceedings of the Center for International Higher Education Documentation Conference, 14 May 1981 (Weston, Massachusetts: Northeastern University, 1981), pp. 46-47. (CIHED Conferences Series, no. 3).

[14] Hall, pp. 47-48.

[15] Hall, p. 54.

[16] Claus Reschke, "Career Education at the College Level: A Modest Proposal" (Paper presented at the 44th Annual Meeting of the American Association of Teachers of German, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Aug. 1976, p. 8). (ERIC ED 132 881)

[17] Reschke, pp. 10-14.

[18] The courses at Northern Illinois and Wayne State University are described in two articles respectively: Collette Verger Michael, "L'Enseignment du français commercial et ses problemes," French Review, vol. 55, no. 1 (Oct. 1981), 17-26 and Jacqueline Morton, "Suggestions for the Organization of a Course in Commercial French," French Review, vol. 5, no. 3 (Feb. 1978), 398-406.

[19] Verger, pp. 17-18.

[20] Verger, pp. 17-18; Morton, p. 399.

[21] Verger, pp. 19-20; Morton, pp. 403-404.

[22] The two ESL programs in question are discussed in two articles: Mary-ann V. Protrowski, "Business As Usual: Using the Case Study Method to Teach ESL to Executives," TESOL Quarterly, vol. 16, no. 2 (June 1982), 229-238, and Michele Rivas, "Entraînement d'étudiants francophones à la négociation d'affaires et au débat public en anglais. L'Enseignement de la compétence de communication en langues secondes." Paper delivered at the Colloque de la Commission Interuniversitaire Seusse, Neuchatel, March 15-17, 1976. (ERIC ED 163 817)

[23] Several articles have been written on foreign language study for special purposes at the pre-college levels, but one of the most interesting compilations is that edited by Louise R. Witherell, The Business Component: Practical Approaches for High School and University. (Papers delivered at the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, Omaha, Nebraska, April 9-11, 1981), pp. 1-18. (ERIC ED 212 130). This report consists of three articles and explains the need for the inclusion of a business component in the foreign language curriculum and discusses instructional materials, teaching methods, and course design for the different levels of instruction from elementary school through college. The introductory paper, "Business Component and FLS" by Louise Witherell emphasizes three points: 1)the integration of the business component with the cultural component, 2)where to find the appropriate materials, and 3)how much of these materials should be taught at each level. The second paper, "The Business Component: Emphasis on French" by Brian J. Tarro, argues that the training of career oriented, linguistically and culturally competent foreign language and business majors should be given the highest priority in our schools, citing inadequate foreign language preparation as one of the major reasons for the steady decline

in America's percentage of total international trade. The third paper, "The Business Component: Emphasis on Spanish by Raquel Kersten" focuses on the description of instructional materials, teaching methods, and classroom activities for different levels of language teaching.

[24] With regard to the Reschke syllabus we have combined its three parts into syllabus for purposes of showing the cohesiveness of the program, the author's primary intent.

[25] Verger, p. 18.

[26] Although little has been said about instructional materials for foreign language business classes, they are as important as program design, lesson planning and learning techniques. Unfortunately, given the lack of published or manufactured materials for these courses and the rather recent inception of the latter, only peripheral references, like those made in some of the articles mentioned, have been made about such items as texts, audio-visuals, etc. To be sure, bibliographies like the one compiled by Geoffrey M. Voght of Eastern Michigan University are being printed and materials of various types are being produced, all of which portend well the future of the resource aspect of language business programs. However, until the latter have been developed, at least to the degree that they are meeting the instructional needs of both learner and teacher, the proper instructional and learning materials will not be designed.

[27] James W. Brown, Opciones Spanish Correspondence. Level I. Learning Activity Packet. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. National Institute of Education, 1977.

[28] Brown, p. 4.

[29] Rivas, p. 21. One of the most recent books on the subject of foreign language methods approaches and techniques is that of Hector Hammerly, Syn-

thesis in Second Language Teaching: An Introduction to Languistics. Blaine, Washington: Second Language Publications, 1982. Chapters 11-20 are particularly informative in this regard.

Appendix A

Model Syllabus - First Semester Business German
proposed by Professor Claus Reschke
University of Houston, Texas[1]

Week	Grammar Module	Resource Module	Situational Module
1	Present tense, regular and some irregular verbs; gender; plurals; basic sentence structures	Phonology; numbers; greetings; names; simple introductions; days of week; months of year; common forms of address; social clichés	Orientation
2&3	Nominative and accusative cases; ein-/der- words, verbal complement; coordinating conjunctions	Background; family; age; hometown; education; professions; changing money; purchases, prices; costs; telling time; opening, closing time	Biographical Information Money matters; time
4&5	Modal verbs; imperatives; negation	Making reservations for dinner; food items; 25 different foods and 6 different drinks to order in a restaurant for various meals	Restaurant
6&7	Dative case; present perfect tense; time phrases	Asking and giving directions inside and outside a building (city, highway); getting a room (hotel, pension); getting service; buying newspapers, magazines, etc.	Directions Rental and Purchases; hotel or pension; newspapers, magazines, etc.
8	Narrative past; infinitive constructions; open conditions	Telephone clichés; leaving a message with the operator or secretary	Telephone
9&10	Future tense; general subjunctive	Buying stamps; inquiring what cost of postage is; sending packages and telegrams inside the country, continent, overseas	Post Office
11&12	Doubtful prepositions; genitive case; special subjunctive	Getting people to restate things more simply; departure and arrival of bus, train, plane; planning and inquiring about a trip; getting a taxi and talking with the driver; service station; car breakdown; service and maintenance instructions; in need of help	Transportation; travel bureau; car care

Appendix A (cont.)

Week	Grammar Module	Resource Module	Situational Module
13&14	Relative pronouns: da/wo- compounds; prepositional objects	Being tired, hungry, thirsty, sick, in need of some personal comfort; describing medical needs to pharmacist, doctor, nurse or some other person providing emergency care; asking for embassy, consulate or police; arranging meeting with someone: time, place, date; issuing a simple invitation (cigarette, drink, lunch, dinner, theater, concert, movie)	Personal welfare; emergencies; invitations; arranging meetings

[1] This program development chart is a composite of three program charts cited in Reschke, pp. 17-19. The author did not indicate the texts for this course nor the requirements.

Appendix B

Le français comercial. Syllabus
prepared by Colette Verger Michael
Northern Illinois University[1]

Required Texts: Mauger, Gaston, et Jacqueline Charon. Le Français comercial. Manuel I. Paris: Larousse, 1975.
: Bruezière, Maurice, et Jacqueline Charon. Le Français comercial. Paris: Hachette, 1967.
: Clas, André, and Paul A. Horguelin. Le Français, langue des affaires. Montréal: McGraw-Hill, 1979.
: Kettridge, J.O. French-English Dictionary of Commercial and Financial Terms, Phrases and Practices. London and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1976.

Syllabus

Week 1 Generalities: geography, history.
Reading assignment: Textes: "Les origines du commerce", "Le développement du commerce".
: Manuel: pp. 7-25.

Week 2 Tourism: Setting up a trip throughout France for an American businessman.
Reading: Textes: "Les débuts d'un homme d'affaires".
Manuel: p. 31; pp. 52-59.
Writing assignment: hotel reservation.

Week 3 Personnel management; detailed layout of French business letter.
Reading: Textes: "La planification et l'organigramme".
Manuel: pp. 61-83.
Exercises: Manuel: pp. 65, 77.
Writing: Curriculum vitae (in French).

Week 4 Commerce: retail, wholesale, domestic, foreign.
Reading: Textes: "La fonction du gros"; "La fonction du détail".
Manuel: pp. 84-102.
Exercises: Manuel: pp. 87, 93, 102.
Writing: Letter of recommendation.

Week 5 Market and Marketing; warehouses and shops.
Reading: Textes: "Une affaire bien dirigée", "L'apparition des grands magasins".
: Manuel: pp. 103-21.
Exercises: Manuel: p. 106; pp. 111, 121.
Writing: Letter relating to information on merchandise, price lists.

Week 6 Publicity and postal services. The metric system.
Reading: Textes: "Les mesures anglaises et le systéme métrique".
"Les relations publiques".
Manuel: pp. 122-44.
Exercises: Manuel: pp. 127, 132.
Writing: Letter to the post office, "paquet resté en souffrance".

Appendix B (cont.)

Week 7 Transportation: road transport; railway traffic.
Reading: Textes: "Le chemin de fer, semeur de civilisation".
Manuel: pp. 145-65.
Exercises: Manuel: pp. 149, 154, 160-61, 165.
Writing: Complaint: receipt of damaged merchandise.

Week 8 Transportation: sea trade, via ship-canal, air service.
Reading: Textes: "Les transports aériens et maritimes".
Manuel: pp. 166-86.
Exercises: pp. 170, 175, 181, 185.
Writing: Job application.

Week 9 Sales: techniques and principles.
Reading: Textes: "La vente des Dauphines".
Manuel: pp. 187-208.
Exercises: Manuel: pp. 191, 197, 202, 207.
Writing: Letter about incorrect check.
Letter asking for references about an employee.

Week 10 Contracts and invoices.
Readings: Textes: "La monnaie, instrument économique".
"Le système financier de Law".
Manuel: pp. 209-28.
Exercises: Manuel: pp. 212, 217, 223, 228.
Writing: Payment by draft; extension of credit.

Week 11 Introduction to the French economy. The Common Market. Imports; exports.
Readings: Textes: "Le crédit documentaire".
"Le Marché commun".
Manuel: pp. 229-41.
Exercises: Manuel: pp. 236, 241.
Writing: Outline and summarize article "Le Marché commun".

Week 12 Banks; bank forms and checks, terms of payment.
Reading: Textes: "Le service des traites dans une banque".
Manuel: pp. 242-51.
Exercises: Manuel: pp. 246, 251.
Writing: Letter to customer advising them of an increase in service charges.

Week 13 Stock exchange.
Reading: Textes: "Le mécanisme de la Bourse".
"Le marché des capitaux".
Manuel: pp. 252-64.
Exercises: Manuel: pp. 257, 263.
Writing: Stock exchange report; answer to job application.

Appendix B (cont.)

Week 14 Companies.
Readings: Textes: "L'origine des trusts"; "Les cartels".
Manuel: pp. 265-82.
Exercises: Manuel: pp. 268, 272, 282.
Writing: Outline and summarize article "L'origine des trusts".

Week 15 Taxes and insurances.

[1] This syllabus is cited in Varger, pp. 24-25.

Appendix C

(a) Sample syllabus - Business Spanish Course: 1st semester

Business Spanish — 3 credits
Prerequisite: 2 years of Spanish or permission of instructor — Level: third year

Required texts: Jarvis, Ana, et.al. Business and Finance Workbook. Boston: D.C. Heath & Co., 1981.

Ramírez, Alejandro V. Derecho Mercantil y Documentación. México, D.F.: Editora Nacional, 1978.

Santos, Nelly. Español comercial. New York: Harper and Row, 1981.

Tamamos, Ramón. Introducción a la economía española. Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1967.

Program

Week	
1st	Introduction, panoramic view of basic business terms and documents. Economics of Spain: Geography and Demography.
2nd 3rd	Business Administration and Management: terms, readings, business form letters and contracts. Economics of Spain: agriculture and cattle-raising. Exam I.
4th 5th	Banking Operations: terms, readings, letters of credit and information, bills of exchange. Economics of Spain: fish industry. Exam II.
6th 7th	Real Estate: terms, readings, related correspondence. Economics of Spain: industrial sector. Exam III.
8th	Oral reports, interviews, role-playing in business situations, interpreting. Economics of Spain: exports and tourism.
9th 10th	Accounting and Bookkeeping: terms, readings, letters requiring payment, business ledgers. Economics of Spain: foreign capital investment. Exam IV.
11th 12th	Credit and Finance: terms, readings, letter soliciting credit and protesting non-payment of bills. Economics of Spain: National income and its distribution. Exam V.
13th 14th	Business Law: terms, readings, letters granting power of attorney, legal documents. Economics of Spain: the financial and fiscal systems. Exam VI.

Appendix C (cont.)

15th Oral Presentations II: interviews, role-playing in business situations, interpreting. Economics of Spain: the labor force and economic outlook.

16th Final exam and oral practicum: lessons 1-6.

(b) Sample syllabus Business Spanish Course - 2nd semester

Business Spanish: second semester — 3 credits
Prerequisite: Business Spanish: first semester — Level: 3rd year

Required Texts: Jarvis, Ana, et.al. Business and Finance Workbook. Boston: D.C. Heath & Co., 1981.

Miller, J. Dale, et.al. USA-Hispanic South America: Culture Capsules. Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House Publishers, 1979.

Santos, Nelly. Español comercial. New York: Harper & Row, 1981.

Program

Week

1st Introduction, review of Spanish 307, particularly correspondence. Culture: Venezuela.

2nd 3rd Macro and Micro Economics: terms, readings, sales and international payment letters, suppliers memos and vouchers. Culture: Colombia. Exam I.

4th 5th Statistics, Data Processing, Computers: terms, readings, programming, short reports; questionnaires and surveys. Culture: Ecuador. Exam II.

6th 7th Secretarial and Office Management: terms, readings, memoranda telegrams, cablegrams, receipts. Culture: Peru. Exam III.

8th Oral Presentations I: interviews, role-playing in business situations, interpreting. Culture: Chile.

9th 10th Marketing Management and International Marketing: terms, readings, marketing reports, letters of consignment. Culture: Bolivia. Exam IV.

Appendix C (cont.)

11th Advertising and Sales: terms, readings, advertisements, letters
12th requesting catalogues and prices, purchase orders, invoices.
Culture: Argentina. Exam V.

13th Transportation and Insurance: terms, readings, shipping invoices,
14th claim and adjustment letters, insurance and transportation forms.
Culture: Uruguay. Exam VI.

15th Oral Presentations II: interviews, role-playing in business situations, interpreting. Culture: Paraguay.

16th Final exam and oral practicum.

DESCRIPTION AND REQUIREMENTS FOR BUSINESS SPANISH COURSE: FIRST AND SECOND SEMESTER

These courses are sequence courses and are designed for students preparing themselves for or interested in a career in international business and economics particularly as they relate to the Spanish-speaking world.

Terms common to the multiple fields of business, commerce and economics will be presented and studied as will some of the related concepts. Readings concerning the different business areas (marketing, finance, accounting, advertising, business administration, macro- and micro-economics, etc.) will be undertaken for discussion and the composition of the various types of commercial correspondence and documentation learned. In addition to these readings and written exercises, the student will also engage in real-life situations peculiar to the business world via oral situational role-playing. He/she will also familiarize himself/herself not only with the distinctive professional conventions of Spanish and Latin American business meetings and procedures but will also become knowledgeable of the attitudes, customs, manners, and life-styles of his Spanish-speaking counterpart. Moreover, translation exercises dealing with commercial correspondence, documentation and other printed matter will be undertaken periodically as will interpreting practicums, dealing with specific business situations, and studies of the socio-political, economic and geographical realities of Spain and Spanish America. Finally, grammar will be review as needed. Films, slides, a tape program and other audio-visual aids in addition to the required texts and other printed matter will provide the instructional materials for this course.

The objectives for both courses are four-fold: 1)to help the student develop communicative competence in Spanish in all the skills--listening, speaking, reading and writing--for business and business-realted situations and undertakings; 2)to provide him or her with a knowledge of the terminology, practices, procedures, and documents used in the commercial world; 3)to familiarize the learner with the socio-economic, political and geographic realities of the Spanish-speaking world as well as with its customs, traditions, attitudes and values; and 4)to give the student some understanding of basic business concepts.

Oral and written examinations will be administered after each unit and quizzes given as needed. Several oral and written reports on specific business

and business-related topics will also be required as will participation in all other classroom activities. Other projects will be assigned and graded during both semesters and overall student achievement will be judged on the student's performance with respect to each of these undertakings.

Appendix D

Model Lesson Plan - Business Spanish
(based on syllabus in Appendix C)

Theme	:	Marketing and Market Management, emphasis--Spain and Spanish America.
General Objectives	:	In today's lesson the students will learn the terms, concepts and documentation commonly used in marketing and, together with knowledge acquired from a study of cultural differences as well as of current economic reality, particularly of Spain, will undertake those communicative activities to which they will be exposed in an Hispanic Business Setting.
Specific Objectives	:	The students will improve aural skill through a brief dictation in marketing.
	:	The students will learn and use basic marketing terminology.
	:	The students will acquire an understanding of key marketing concepts, especially those related to distribution and market segmentation.
	:	The students will develop oral ability to talk about buying and selling.
	:	The students will be able to compose a letter requesting information about new markets.
	:	The students will become familiar with a marketing problem of contemporary Spain.
	:	The students will improve their knowledge and use of Spanish by way of written grammar and translation exercises.
	:	The students will become acquainted with the dietary habits of Bolivians and see how they compare with those of the U.S.
Materials	:	textbooks (Jarvis, Santos, Miller, etc.), hand-outs, transparencies.
Planned Activities		
Dictation (5 min.)	:	The class will take a short dictation concerning marketing read three times--once for comprehension, once for writing, and once for reviewing--and will correct their errors by comparing their version with that of hand-out.
Vocabulary Study (5 min.)	:	The students will learn the marketing terms listed in Santo's "Mercadotecnia y Mercadeo internacional," Español comercial, p. 167. Difficult terms will be glossed and explained via handout. Sentences with words follow.

Appendix D (cont.)

Discussion (10 min.) : The students will read passages from Santo's "Las fases de distribución," pp. 168-171, assigned for homework previous night, and via questionnaire prepared on ditto will discuss selection.

Oral Communication (7-8 min.) : The student will act out dialogues in Jarvis's "La Señora López habla de negocios," Business and Finance Workbook, pp. 9 and 17, prepared last night to simulate a typical situation.

Correspondence (7-8 min.) : Using transparencies and hand-outs as well as model 27 provided in Santos, p. 329, the students will be taught, by explanation and example, the uses, content, and formats for a letter soliciting marketing information to write an exemplary one for homework.

Reading Comprehension (5 min.) : The students will begin reading the article titled "Patinazo's del aceite" taken from Cambio 16 (1 febrero 1982), pp. 41-42, on the declining olive export market. Vocabulary words and questionnaires will be provided on hand-out.

Grammar and Translation: (10 min.) The students will write out exercises A and B, p. 19 in Jarvis, Business Handbook on possessive adjectives and irregular verbs in the present, and will translate 5 of 10 sentences concerning the fundamentals of marketing to improve writing skills and knowledge of language and subject matter.

Culture (5 min.) : The students will read and discuss the culture capsule "Food," in USA-Hispanic South America Culture Capsules, pp. 62-63.

Tarea:

Study : vocabulary in Santos, p. 167.
Read : ¿Qué es un mercado?" Santos, pp. 172-177.
Prepare : "Situational exercises" in Jarvis, pp. 21-22.
Write : answers to questions on sheet "¿Qué es un mercado?" distributed in class and based on homework reading (Santos, pp. 172-177).
: remaining exercises in Jarvis, lesson 2, pp. 19-23 and on translation sheet.
: a letter soliciting information about marketing abroad.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COMMERCIAL DOCUMENT IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGE FOR BUSINESS

by

Dr. Carolyn L. Jacobs

Instructor of French
Houston Community College System
Houston, Texas 77057

Carolyn L. Jacobs
1932 North Blvd., Apt. 4
Houston, TX 77098

The Importance of the Commercial Document In Teaching Foreign Language for Business

Teaching foreign language for business can inspire both excitement and dread. As part of the trend toward emphasizing practical applications of language study, it brings to us new students, students who are perhaps more pragmatic than we teachers were in our formative stages. As part of the effort to incorporate an international perspective into our educational system, commercial language teaching expands our horizons to other disciplines and to the interrelatedness of the globe. It brings together language teachers where we are often separated by our specific languages. But at the same time, this endeavor calls for us to embrace an area which may be a foreign language to us. Trained in the humanities, we may not only be ignorant of business practice, but we may also harbor suspicions of the business world. By the same token, the business community may view us as completely impractical and unrealistic. So business and the language teaching profession must get acquainted, both in terms of knowledge and world view. We may each learn from the other, and we are grateful to conferences such as this one for bringing us together.

These comments pertain specifically to courses offered for students with a minimum of two years of college level foreign language study, since the third year appears to be the most common level for commercial foreign language offerings at American colleges.[1] A third-year course is simply a beginning. It might be part of a more extensive program in preparation for

work in business. But at many of our institutions, it will, at least for a time, be the only course of its kind.

Before we reflect on the course itself, let us look at the students. It is probable that such courses will attract students whose linguistic and academic backgrounds are far from homogeneous. Third-year students will need considerable practice in both oral and written expression. With the current trend of stressing oral proficiency in first and second-year courses, there may be a need for extra emphasis in writing and grammar in a business language course. Some of the students will probably have had more than two years of foreign language study, however. A few may be non-native speakers of English and may or may not be native speakers of the language being studied. Major subjects of most of the group will probably range from foreign language, although perhaps not the particular language of the course, to business administration and international studies. But even students who have taken courses in economics and management will rarely have had much practical experience with the business world.

What, then, may we reasonably hope to accomplish with such a diverse group of students in a single commercial language course? Many approaches are possible, as indicated by a number of excellent articles appearing over the past several years in The French Review, Die Unterrichtspraxis, The Modern Language Journal and other language-related periodicals.[2] I would like to suggest four specific objectives and then some ways of meeting those objectives. At the end of the course, the students should be able to 1) recognize, comprehend and use actively in speech and writing business terminology and style

in both English and the foreign language; 2) situate any one event in a commercial transaction in relation to the preceding and successive stages of such a transaction, both from the point of view of the buyer and the seller; 3) draft a commercial letter in the foreign language with attention to language, style and format, in response to another document or to a set of instructions; 4) locate and use reference tools which may be needed to understand, translate, draw up, complete or otherwise follow up on various types of commercial documents.

Learning commercial language constitutes a kind of apprenticeship which involves simultaneous exposure to the language of transactions and to the substance of those exchanges. One way to approach this learning process is by plunging the students into a business context throught the medium of commercial documents. Modern business practice centers around documents. Depending upon the scope of the exchange of goods or services, documents may range from a simple sales slip or an exchange of letters or telexes to bid invitations, bids, bid evaluations forms, feasibility studies, contracts, procedures manuals, progress reports, minutes of meetings, purchase orders, bills of lading, invoices, customs documents, authorizations and permits, technical specifications and drawings, forecasts, schedules, operating manuals--the list is endless. In a large corporation, every operation connected with a project must be recorded, even important telephone calls dealing with policy, costs or schedules. Copies of the records are distributed to appropriate personnel and put into the project master file, eventually to be transferred to the company archives. Commercial documents have several functions. They indicate the obligations of each party to any

transaction or contract, enable employees connected with the job to carry out their particular assignments satisfactorily, permit new employees to become familiar with the company and the specific product, project or operation and play a key role in determining the outcome of litigation which may arise in relation to a contract.

Taking the document as the basis for study in an initial course has two advantages, both for the student and the teacher. It allows the student to learn terminology in reference to a concrete situation which facilitates retention. The document also permits re-creation of the circumstances of a transaction in a way which may be required of someone actually on the job. Selection of related documents associated with a specific transaction or project allows for reinforcement of terminology through repeated exposure and makes it possible for students to observe pattern and sequence in business practice.

Let us examine more closely how this may be accomplished. A series of topics to be studied in a course on commercial language might be: the structure of the corporation, the office setting and correspondence, commercial transactions and contracts, placing an order, confirming an order, packaging and shipping, delivery and billing, payment, insurance, customs, guarantees and claims. Obviously, these topics overlap, but for each, different types of documents would be selected as the basis for presentation of vocabulary and concepts and for discussion. For example, for the structure of the corporation, we might choose an organization chart, letters of job application for specific positions, and resumés. For the office setting, a purchase order for office equipment and a letter relating to the order would be

appropriate. A supplementary article such as one which appeared in the periodical La Recherche, concerning the automated office of today and the future would be valuable here.[3] Since the array of documents is endless, the difficulty will be to limit the choice to representative types which reflect the roles of both the buyer and the seller or contractor and client in a transaction. Some documents should be originals in the foreign language, others originals in English.

A sequence of practical activities using these documents works toward the goals of the course: comparing original documents of the same type in both English and the foreign langauge, comparing an original and its translation, comparing several translations of the same document, translating from English into the foreign language, and ultimately, drafting letters in the foreign language in response to a document. Any of these activities might be done at various points in the course, but in the early stages it would be most helpful to emphasize comparison of originals and translations, and actual translation into English. Considerable practice in translating into English is what would make more feasible translation into the foreign language and drawing up original letters in the latter stages of the course.

How are the course objectives met by these activities? The first objective of learning business terminology is a difficult one since many of the terms will be unfamiliar even in English. Max Dany and Francis Grand-Clément, in their article on commercial correspondence as pertaining to import-export, suggest that in order for the words to have a clear meaning in the minds of the students, the instruction in commercial techniques should be carried out in their native language, presumably in some other course.[4] In fact, the

students may not have taken another course and the commercial foreign language instructor will have to teach the concept as well as the term in both languages.

It is extremely difficult to learn business language from a list of terms and definitions. Explanations will not always be easy even when the pertinent documents are available. But, shipping terms, for example, will have much more substance when presented in the context of a letter confirming an order for valves for a pipeline in Algeria, the terms being FOB Marseille with inland freight paid by the buyer and export packaging provided by the buyer's packer. In explaining these terms as they relate to the valves, we can discuss the other shipping options not chosen and familiarize the students with reference materials such as Incoterms of the International Chamber of Commerce. Using a letter will provide review of terms already encountered on the purchase order which may have been taught in another unit, thus providing desirable reinforcement of material.

Comparison of comparable letters in English and the foreign language as well as of translations of documents facilitates learning terminology in both languages simultaneously. Even more useful is the act of translating, initially from the foreign language into English. Translation involves active use of the terms. It requires the student to comprehend the source and and put it into understandable English.

In regard to mastery of terminology, immediate understanding and the ability to go back and forth from one language to another is an appropriate goal for a limited list of terms. Beyond that, however, it is important that the students be conversant with a much broader range of specialized

language, recognizing certain terms as shipping terms or contractual terms, for example, but not necessarily knowing instantly the exact meaning. Business language varies from field to field, and within a given field, from company to company. With proper background, one can master the specific terms needed in a relatively short time when the need arises. What is important in the type of course being considered is to teach the students how to find out what they do not have at their command.

The second course objective which involves understanding the stages of a commercial transaction is attained gradually as students work through the course, studying sequences of documents which become increasingly more involved. Initially, the student may work with a purchase order and an invoice, then a purchase order, letter of confirmation and invoice. Eventually, shipping and customs documents may be included, then a request for quotation, bid summary to be sent to the client, and bid award sent to the vendor. The student will move from the simple buyer/seller relationship of a retailer ordering merchandise to sell to the public to an understanding of the contractor/client relationship in the context of a larger project, and within that, the relationship of the main contractor to suppliers or sub-contractors. Documents may be used as the basis for oral discussion in class where students are challenged to reconstruct the sequence of events in a transaction based on information in selected documents, and to make decisions regarding transactions, as though they were the parties involved.

The third objective of the course is to draft a letter in the foreign language with attention to language, style and format. We have discussed how translation leads to familiarization with business terminology in both languages. Perhaps more important, the rendering of sentences from a foreign

tongue into idiomatic English requires careful analysis and comparison of syntactical and rhetorical patterns in the two languages, and the study of levels of language and nuances. Even though business French, for example, is more direct than most written French, it is still much more indirect and formally structured, and the vocabulary more technically precise than the corresponding style in American English. Translation practice leads to internalization of stylistic patterns and characteristics of a particular language and usage. Thus, translation into English is the best training for the ultimate objective of drafting business correspondence in the foreign language. This was borne out in my own experience of teaching commercial French last spring at the University of St. Thomas in Houston. At the end of the semester, after considerable translation practice, the students were able to write quite acceptable business letters in French in response to another letter, or to a set of instructions.

Emphasizing translation also leads to achieving the fourth goal of the course which consists of knowing appropriate reference materials for dealing with commercial documents in a variety of ways. In order to do good translations, students will need to consult specialized dictionaries, study manuals of commercial usage and model letters, perhaps locate manufacturers' catalogs and directories and occasionally refer to technical publications. The instructor will have the occasion to familiarize the class with these resources as specific needs arise in the context of translation assignments. A visit to a company library might also be arranged in this connection. Knowing how to locate information is especially important since the students who ultimately work in the business world could be employed in any of a multitude of settings.

The value of translation as a language-learning process was made real to me through my own experience as an in-house technical translator in the engineering and construction industry. While this type of work requires a much higher level of language development than that with which we are dealing in a third-year course, there are still parallels to be made. I first worked in a sizeable translation service developed within a corporation to translate a large volume of documents from and into French, in connection with the construction of a natural gas liquefaction plant in Algeria. Trained technical translators were not then available in Houston in the required numbers. The department had to train its own staff, and did so quite effectively. Many of these translators later went on to do similar work in other corporations in Houston and elsewhere. The department was headed by an excellent professional translator who had been trained at the School for Translation and Interpretation at the University of Geneva, and who had both industrial and United Nations translation experience. Only a few of the rest of the staff were already professional translators upon hiring. The others who were successful all came with high verbal ability and the requisite fluency in French and English, but with various backgrounds. Most were native speakers of French since the greatest volume of translation was into French. Two of us had academic backgrounds. Some had had virtually no experience in translation as such.

The process was one of learning by doing. Individuals were given documents to translate. All translations were reviewed and corrected by at least one other person, usually the department supervisor. Corrected translations were returned to the original translator for study and comparison. Frequently, translators conferred with one another, and with engineers and company

employees with other areas of technical expertise. The department built up an extensive library of specialized dictionaries and reference materials. We compiled individual and project glossaries. We had available the company library. Logs and files were kept of all translations so that they could be referred to for related translations. From that process of translation, consultation, reference, correction and comparison, a number of us developed the skill to be able to call ourselves professional translators. Two years of translating all manner of commercial and technical documents and correspondence from French into English made it possible for me to begin to translate effectively into French. Ultimately, I was hired by another company where I became, for a time, the sole translator for a project. Most of the translation there was into French. Documents of crucial legal importance were checked by the Paris office of the company. I was hired on the basis of a test which consisted of translating a technical report into French. Only my long experience translating from French into English in a related field enabled me to qualify for the second position.

The importance of translation practice as a learning device is also supported by the "Guidelines for College and University Programs in Translator Training" published by the American Translators Association. These guidelines recommend that, in the first of a series of translation workshops, prior to doing actual translating, the students spend a considerable amount of time comparing two or more translations of the same text. This should be followed by actual translation of short texts. Moreover, there is an interesting comment in the guidelines which highlights the value of translating as a tool for foreign langauge learning in general, not just for the formation of

translators. It is suggested that translation workshops be offered to students in fields other than languages who have had a minimum of two years of college-level foreign language study. What these non-language majors learn in this way should "enhance their value as scientists, business administrators, engineers, etc., or provide them with an excellent research tool in a foreign language."[5]

I have chosen not to list translation as a course objective, but rather to stress its value as a tool in a course at the third-year level. Students will, of course, gain a certain degree of facility at translating through practice and discussion. And if they are hired for their foreign language capabilities, it is likely that they will be called upon to do translations.[6] But, much more extensive knowledge of the language is necessary before they should begin to think of themselves as translators. It is part of the responsibility of the instructor to educate students as to the complexity of translation and the type of preparation and experience necessary. Students who are hired for their language abilities will themselves have to educate those around them as to the nature of language-related work, precisly because misconceptions of what is involved in translation abound in the general public.

The problem of education as to the types of qualifications necessary for language work was encountered in a survey of Michigan businesses conducted at Eastern Michigan University. Many firms hiring bilingual personnel indicated that to them is was "not important" that candidates for language jobs possess certificates of competence. John Hubbard and Robert Ristau conclude in the report of the results of the survey that companies need to be made aware of the existence of certificates and of what they represent.[7]

Businesses frequently learn through costly mistakes what is required in a translator. Our students may at times be asked by a company to do work they are not capable of. The students must be prepared to decline and show why, as well as to help find a competent person.

In this paper I have emphasized the importance of teaching foreign language for business through the vehicle of correspondence and documents of the type which are actually encountered in the business world. Upon being hired, a new employee is frequently given documents to study as an introduction to the job. While specific language and practice will vary from firm to firm, individuals who know how to proceed, how to find out what they need to know and how to fit their particular job into the overall business will be able to make a contribution to the work. Business language evolves rapidly. Manuals published five to ten years ago may present formulas which are now archaic. Practice in studying and translating current documents, however, will develop proficiency in reading and writing the foreign language, two skills which are crucial in the business world where the written word plays a key role. Even one course in foreign language for business can give students tools which may later be very useful in many types of jobs in international business.

Notes

[1] See Christine Uber Grosse, " A Survey of Spanish for Business at AACSB Colleges and Universities in the United States," The Modern Language Journal, 65 (1982), 383-390.

[2] See especially Patricia Francis Cholakian, "Commercial French: An Opportunity for Innovative Classroom Techniques," The French Review, 54 (1981), 666-671; Colette Verger Michael, "L'Enseignement du français commercial et ses problèmes," The French Review, 55 (1981), 17-26; and Jacqueline Morton, "Suggestions for the Organization of a Course in Commercial French," The French Review, 51 (1978), 398-406.

[3] Najah Naffah, "Télématique & bureautique: les secrétaires électroniques," 12 (1981), 1310-1313.

[4] "Correspondance commerciale: Une opération d'import-export," Le Français dans le Monde, 119 (1976), 31-40, 49.

[5] Revised March, 1975, p. 2. Available from the American Translators Association, 190 Croton Avenue, Ossining, N.Y. 10562.

[6] John R. Hubbard and Robert A. Ristau, "A Survey of Bilingual Employment Opportunities in International Trade," Foreign Language Annals, 15 (1982), 115-121.

[7] Ibid.

BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE MADE EASY AND FUN TO TEACH

by

Denise Guback

Teaching Associate
Department of French
2090 Foreign Languages Building
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Urbana, Illinois 61801

BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE MADE EASY AND FUN TO TEACH

Some of you are here to learn how to teach a business correspondence course; some how to teach it in a foreign language; some to learn a new method for a so-called boring subject which they teach reluctantly; some to find out how it could possibly be fun.

In the U.S., a foreign language teacher traditionally has a college degree in literature and/or/eventually in teacher's education. This particular background does not seem to blend well with business since the latter requires specific knowledge and training. Having both a literary and business education, friends in the literary world and practice in a francophone country in both private and international companies - in more than one language - and having enjoyed teaching a French Business class for eight years, I felt the need to share my practical experience with you. I never had any former training in teaching.

You have - believe it or not - one advantage over the traditional business correspondence teacher: that is that you have acquired a foreign language with all the vocabulary and the grammar that it implies. The vocabulary can be enhanced to encompass the outside world, i.e. the business world, and the grammatical skills can be applied to the learning of a communication technique that is reflected in a business letter. Why then limit one's knowledge of a foreign language to a specific field? Languages are communication. Communication is at all levels. You spent some five, ten years

to develop skills in one or more foreign languages. Why not go further?

Now. In order to set up a successful foreign language business correspondence course, two facts should be taken into consideration: 1) the traditional ways of expression used in each particular country; 2) the unique relationship that exists between seller and buyer. For instance:

1) a) the salutation:

ENGLISH	Dear Sirs:
GERMAN	Sehr Geehrte Herren!
DUTCH	Geachte Heren,
FRENCH	Messieurs,
SPANISH	Señores:

b) the date:

ENGLISH	May 17, 1983
GERMAN	den 17. Mai 1983
DUTCH	17 mei 1983
SPANISH	17 de Mayo 1983

c) the body of the letter:

ENGLISH	We acknowledge receipt of your inquiry...
GERMAN	Wir danken Ihnen für Ihre Anfrage...
DUTCH	We danken U voor Uw aanvraag
FRENCH	Nous avons bien reçu votre demande...
SPANISH	Hemos recibido su demanda...

d) the complimentary close:

ENGLISH	Sincerely yours,
GERMAN	Hochachtungsvoll
DUTCH	Hoogachtend,
FRENCH	Nous vous prions d'agréer, Messieurs, nos bien sincères salutations.
SPANISH	Atentamente,

e) Any document sent together with the letter is mentioned at the bottom of the page:

ENGLISH	enclosure (encl.)
GERMAN	Anlage (Anl.)
DUTCH	bijlage (bijl.)
FRENCH	pièce jointe (p.j.) of annexe
SPANISH	adjunto or anexo

In all business correspondence, the first person plural is mostly used since the letter involves the responsibility of the company rather than that of the person who writes it.

The first paragraph always sums up a previous situation and is usually preceded by references on the left hand side of the page.

Any particular subject is dealt with in a separate paragraph.

In denoting thousands and millions in American correspondence, the decimal replaces the comma.

Keeping these simple rules in mind at all times will take the drudgery out of teaching this particular subject.

Since there are many ways to start or end a letter, have students come up with a different formula and compete for the most elaborate. It's fun! While teaching, point to a student to request a specific expression. If her or she doesn't come up with a satisfactory answer, you will see that other students will want to give you the answer.

In French, for instance, you could replace the traditional closing with a number of expressions such as:

- "Veuillez agréer, Messieurs, nos salutations distinguées."
- "Agréez, Messieurs, nos salutations très distinguées."
- "Veuillez croire, Messieurs, à l'expression de nos sentiments les meilleurs."
- "Croyez, Messieurs, à l'expression de nos meilleurs sentiments."
- "Nous vous prions de croire, Messieurs, à l'expression de nos sentiments les meilleurs."

Just for fun, you could give a very simple sentence which the students will be asked to elaborate. For example:

- "Comme suite à..."
- "En réponse à..."
- "Nous répondons à..."
- "Nous avons le plaisir de répondre à..."
- "Pour faire suite à...".

A letter reflecting satisfactory conditions could be changed into a letter of complaint. And this leads us to:

2) the relation between seller and buyer.

One principle to bear in mind is: to write with the addressee in mind, and this is the most difficult notion to convey to students. A student in L.A.S. usually has no idea of the business world and, moreover, does not sense the motivation or interests of either party. Therefore a case study should be set up rather than a study of a variety of letters as it is done in textbooks that have been available up to now. I don't know why business correspondence books give examples of letters whose purpose it is to sell nuts and bolts, monkey wrenches, radiators, Brussels lace, knives for slicing ham, coal stoves, wallets, and such parapharnelia! It is most confusing for a student who has never seen a typical business file retracing the various steps from the initial enquiry up to the actual shipping of goods. A good way to set up a file is to ask the students to each play a role in a typical business situation. A different letter would then be written by each student and each constitute part of the file. For example:

- A requests an offer from B for a specific product.
- B sends an offer.
- A requests additional information.
- B sends this information to A.
- A hesitates: he has received several offers from competitors.
- B persuades A to buy.
- A sends his order to B.
- B delivers the order, but the truck delivering the goods is involved in an accident and half of the merchandise is unacceptable.

- A complaints to B.

- B contacts his insurance company, etc.

Even if your class has as many as 25 students, each one of them can play a role in the case study. Photocopies can be made that would enable each student to have a complete file.

To me, this is the best way to teach business correspondence. It's a good subject since it links studies with the real world. Nowadays, it's important.

Denise Guback
University of Illinois
at Urbana-Champaign

THE STOCKMARKET IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES FOR BUSINESS

by

Alois Zeit

Lecturer in German
Department of Foreign Languages
The University of Michigan-Flint
Flint, Michigan 48503

Alois Zeit
The University of Michigan-Flint

The Stockmarket in Foreign Language Classes for Business

John Rassias of CBS' "Sixty Minutes" fame, Professor of Romance Languages at Dartmouth College, and originator of the Dartmouth Model of foreign language instructions, believes that intensive oral interaction and enthusiasm are at the heart of all successful foreign language instruction.[1]

Enthusiasm and spirited conversation can be generated in a foreign language class for business on any level by having students participate in the stockmarket through individually chosen dummy portfolios. Once students "own" stocks, they--on a regular basis--watch their gains and losses, they keep track of market news, business news in general, and business-related news. Approximately ten minutes per class session are reserved during which students report on their holdings, on market activities, and on news of the business world. Depending on students' background and accessibility to information, individual portfolios can contain American stocks, foreign stocks, or both. The important thing to observe is that all reports and discussions be conducted in the target language.

Through stock purchases, investors provide needed capital for industry. The stockmarket provides a means for investors to trade their shares very much the same way items are bought and sold at an auction. The stockmarket is in a qualified way an indicator of a country's business and industry activites. However complex and sometimes contradictory or capricious in its behavior, the market does react to national and global news.[2] A market watcher,

therefore, cannot help but become informed about the business world around him.

But the stockmarket is also a place for active traders, speculators, and people who like to gamble. The market thus can develop a dynamics all its own. Thus while one might place one's money based on strong fundamentals, it becomes equally important to outguess the behavior (moves) of the other participants. It is no wonder then that it has been observed that market behavior is a consequence of greed and fear.[3] The market is indeed a place that makes emotions run high.

If the market is able to exact such strong emotional involvement upon its participants and at the same time teach them to be informed about the world of business, playing the market should be an exciting learning mechanism.

Indeed, it seems to work out that way. Once students have gotten started with their game, the instructional part for the teacher is mostly completed. Stock watching and news gathering become a habit, and the resulting discussions should prove extremely gratifying. The students' activities become self-generating. There is never a lack of topics for discussion, and, if the discussions are indeed held in the target language, students enhance their speaking skills, which should be one objective in every foreign language class for business. Also, playing the stockmarket game as an ancillary activity in class, assures that students keep informed about the state of business through the news.

Before students are sent off to design their portfolios, they must be familiarized with the customary information a newspaper

supplies on stocks. The instructor can hand out copies of a newspaper page with stock listings, select one company as an example, and explain all data that is given for that stock. Students not familiar with the stockmarket will probably listen carefully, considering that they will need the information when they make their stock selections. And students who are familiar with the market need not get bored since the instructor will present the information both in English and in the foreign language. In order to save time it might be useful to hand out a list with key terms and phrases of market language.[4]

Generally a newspaper will list for a particular stock the high and low prices for the preceding 52 weeks, dividends paid or declared, the yield, the price/earnings ratio, sales volume for the day, the high and low prices for the day, the closing price of the stock, and its change vis-a-vis the closing price of the previous day. To non-business students (who also show up in our classes), all these terms could possibly be somewhat perplexing. Such students might have shied away from opening the business pages of a newspaper in the past and--after listening to data and explanations of the above terms--they might still be hesitant to do so. But this feeling should fast disappear once the market game is on the way.

The instructor's work during the semester will largely consist of mediating the discussions and answering questions. Students will want to know more and more about the market. Brokerage houses often supply instructive pamphlets that present information in an easy to understand fashion.[5] It is up to the instructor to see that

he/she is mainly an informant on language and not on the business of the market. Ideally, the instructor should function as an interested partner in discussions. The best way to achieve this is for the teacher to participate in the game with his/her own portfolio.

The initial assignment is for each student to choose a portfolio of stocks and report on it in class--in the foreign language.[6] Depending on the background, this might well be the first time that some students will have to work extensively with numbers and arithmetic in a foreign language. Such students might need considerable help and encouragement at this stage. (Working orally and intensively with numbers is unfortunately an area in basic foreign language instruction that has been too much neglected.)

If past experience is an indicator, most students will show up with a surprisingly diversified list of stocks in their portfolio. The highlight of this first day of reporting should be to hear the reasons why certain stocks were selected for purchase. Such reasons for buying particular stocks are often subjective and highly personal. It would be wise for the teacher to gracefully acknowledge any of these reasons. The teacher should not give financial advice. For one thing, that is not the purpose of the game. Nor is it our purpose to make market experts out of students, but to get them emotionally involved in a market game. It is important that they feel good about their stocks. Feeling good or even excited makes for much better discussions.

With the portfolios in place, the regularly scheduled discussions about stocks, stock-related news and business news in general should take an unpredictable but interesting course. Care should

be taken that students not dwell too long on talking about stocks per se. There is a friendly competition developing among students. Some like to boast about their winnings, some delight in other people's losses (a phenomenon known in German as Schadenfreude, the pleasure one receives from someone else's misfortune). It is up to the teacher to achieve a happy balance between what students like to do--talk stocks, and what the class is supposed to achieve--discussing (in the target language) important developments in the world of business.

Students will soon become expert market watchers. Once they are somewhat familiar with the market at home, foreign market reports can be introduced to the class. Copies of newspaper excerpts can be distributed for reading. Such assignments enhance the students' language proficiency based on authentic native texts in the target language. Next, recordings of foreign market reports can be played in class for listening comprehension and subsequent discussions. For German, such recordings can easily be made from the Deutsche Welle, broadcasting nightly from Cologne over shortwave radio.[7] Students quickly learn the names of important foreign companies. They practice their listening comprehension of numbers through stock quotations and reports on goldfixings and exchange rates. Other business news and commentaries are more difficult to understand. They need special preparation and, perhaps, several replays.

Next to the usual stock quotations and the repetitive news about a day's or week's market activities, some reoccuring topics for discussion include: change in the prime and discount rate,

inflation, OPEC, gold prices and exchange rates. Any of these topics can be treated either briefly and as isolated items, or they can be pursued at length in terms of their relationship with each other and in terms of other economic consequences.

Then there are news topics of a more sporadic nature. One of the big stories during fall 1982, was the Bendix takeover battle with Martin Marietta, which eventually also included United Technologies and Allied Corporation. Students were intrigued by the personalities involved, but the significant question raised was "Why do companies take over other companies?" From a business standpoint the simple answer should be that a company, by taking over another company, stands to gain and make (in the end) higher profits for its shareholders. It makes business sense that a company should want to acquire Marathon Oil with large proven oil reserves and with stock prices that are undervalued. DuPont must have considered it cheaper to "buy" an oil company at a reasonable price rather than engage in the high-risk and expensive business of drilling for oil. In the case of Bendix the reasons for its takeover attempts were less clear. The media seemed convinced that, at the bottom of it all, was the strong ego of Bendix president, William Agee.[8] It is exciting to own stocks of companies involved in takeover battles. The volatility of such stocks makes emotions run high among stock watchers. At an occasion like this students observe how fortunes can be made in the stockmarket. But it is also at occasions like this that student bystanders repeatedly wish that they owned such a stock, that they should have or could have bought a stock that is doing extremely well.

Notice that when students are involved in the stockmarket there can be plenty of occasions for the student to speak in the subjunctive mood. Every stockholder knows of dozens of things he wished he had done differently: bought, held on, sold, exercised more patience or caution, been less timid and more aggressive, etc.

Another topic for discussion during fall 1982, was the impending bankruptcy of Grundig of Germany and its parent company Allegemeine Elektrizitätsgesellschaft (AEG). The debate here centered around government bail-outs. Years back, BMW was helped back on its feet by the government in Germany. BMW subsequently recovered and, in recent years, has become the strongest competitor of Daimler Benz in prestige cars for Germans. The discussion of bail-outs, of course led to the Chrysler Corporation. At this point, the discussion switched course. Chrysler is unique among American corporations in that it has (in the person of Douglas Fraser) a representative of labor sitting on its board of directors. In the eyes of American business, Chrysler might have taken a daring step, but to Lee Iacocca it was perhaps something he knew could work successfully for both management and labor. Codetermination has been the rule in German industry for years. Lee Iacocca learned closely about the practice when, as an executive at Ford, he spent some time with Ford in Germany.

Examples like these show that, while a day's conversation might start out focused and narrow-based, there is no telling where it might lead. There is a start from a familiar and common base, but before long, real conversational interaction takes place. A flow of conversation might develop from one topic to another, or

an argument might ensue leading to the exploration of a subject with an enthusiasm no careful planning is likely to achieve. Such events are not unlike cocktail parties where people of common interests talk "business." Gems like these do not happen every day, but when they do, the teacher better forget about time limits. There is an important learning process going on at this point that probably cannot be matched by what the syllabus for the day dictates.

While we cannot plan specifically for successful and exciting conversation sessions, we can bring about the necessary conditions for it; we can set the stage for it. Students need to shed their inhibitions; they need to be opened up individually and emotionally, and brought together as a group. The stockmarket helps create a community of interests among students. The game can also have a democratizing effect within a group if, for instance, a brilliant student does not do too well with his investments while a weaker or shy student makes good in the market.

By involving students in the stockmarket through simulated stockholdings we, in effect, give them an incentive to keep informed about the world of business and economics. With a personal stake in the market, "keeping informed" needs no prodding. When students discuss the market when you enter the classroom, when they teach their parents about their enterprise, or when they bring surprising news items to class, all indications are that they enjoy what they are doing. Working one's way through an annual report could be a task. But give a student a financial report of a company whose stock he/she owns, and the student will study it with focus and the attitude of a true investor. As a stockholder, the student

will, as a matter of course, read the financial pages, not will-nilly but, again focused, looking for specific things and reading the content in a sequence and order of an expert investor.

Business majors are not the only students wanting to study a foreign language for business. Such non-business students sometimes show an aversion toward the business section of a newspaper. The stockmarket game can go a long way in demystifying the content of such pages. While a student starts out looking for very specific information in the financial pages, his/her interest soon widens. Students start asking about commodities, bonds and other securities, etc. It is less important that such students still don't understand many of the things they run across in the paper. What is important is that their attitude toward readings in the world of economics, business, and finance has changed--and that is a major accomplishment.

Getting students involved in the stockmarket as a way to learn a foreign language of business is by no means the only or magic way to enliven a class. Each teacher has his/her own technique, style, and devices to get students to learn effectively and with interest. The stockmarket game is simply one technique that takes advantage of basic teaching and learning principles. By involving students in a common game we create a common interest. We count on their desire to win, we create emotional involvement and friendly competition. As far as language training is concerned the stockmarket is an ideal topic for students to gain oral proficiency in a foreign language for business. Market news in a narrow sense is very repetitive without being identical. At the same time market

news in a wider sense is a barometer (however strange) of business news in general. Effective training in speaking needs repetition of the familiar, it needs to practice the familiar with variation, and gradually it needs to practice the familiar on a more sophisticated level. But oral practice also needs to expand into new areas, cope with new topics. With an individual portfolio as point of departure, the market game provides topics that are virtually without limits. But unlike the often artificial arrangements of topics found in textbooks, new topics in the market game grow, in a natural way, out of discussions.

But what about the teacher who is little familiar with the stockmarket? The best and fastest way to get to know the market (and with it, the world of business) is to own a couple of stocks. There is no better way to learn about a subject than to actively participate in it, to have a stake in it. It does not take much money to own stocks. Recently quoted statistics show that "young" stockholders own shares worth an average of $2,000, while older investors carry an average portfolio worth $9,000 to $10,000.[9] With the help of a broker stocks can be purchased that involve very little risk.

Another way to learn about the market is to resort to the suggested dummy portfolio and watch the transactions. Quickly you might find yourself studying the market pages of the newspaper the way Sergeant Yamana of TV's Barney Miller studies his racing forms. Soon you will be an ardent reader of the financial pages, of business magazines, and you will become a faithful watcher of TV's Nightly Business Report and of Wall Street Week. Reading an

annual report of a company whose stock you own will take on a new meaning. All in all, you will become informed about the business world in a way no textbook can provide.

Finally, to make the market-oriented discussions a success in the classroom, the teacher too must be actively involved with his/her own portfolio. The teacher must display the same excitement and enthusiasm that we expect from the students. Next to being an informant, a mediator in discussion groups, the teacher must, above all, be a participating partner.

Alois Zeit
The University of Michigan-Flint

Notes

[1] John A. Rassias, "All the Class Is a Stage," The Ram's Horn, 1 (1982), 95-105.

[2] Newscasts and written market reports typically include "explanations" of the stockmarket's reaction to nationally and internationally significant news developments. As a caution against the view that "stocks go up and down because of the state of the economy," see David Dreman, "Candide in Wall Street," Forbes, 14 Feb. 1983, pp. 190-91.

[3] To the emotions of greed and fear as motivators for buying and selling stocks can be added the "urge to get even." Cf. Wall Street Week, PBS, 24 Dec. 1982.

[4] The New York Stock Exchange, Inc. has published a pamphlet, The Language of Investing Glossary, which is available, free of charge, from brokerage houses. The instructor who wishes to acquire a basic insight into the stockmarket might find the following book useful: Louis Engel, How to Buy Stocks, 6th ed. (New York: Bantam, 1977).

[5] E.g., Merrill Lynch Pierce Fenner & Smith, Inc., How to Read a Financial Report, 4th ed. (New York , 1979).

[6] The instructor should supply students with record-keeper forms. Such forms can be obtained, free of charge, from brokerage houses, or can be self-designed.

[7] For program information write to: Deutsche Welle, Postfach 10 04 44, Köln 1, Federal Republic of Germany.

[8] John Holusha, "Bendix Chief Playing for High Stakes," New York Times, 10 Sept. 1982, pp. 29 and 33. For summary accounts of the takeover-merger scenario started by William Agee, see Charles Alexander, "Merger Theater of the Absurd," Time, 4 Oct. 1982, pp. 50-51; and Ann Hughey and Frank Allen, "Allied Takes 'Quantum Leap' in Bid to Become High Technology Firm," The Wall Street Journal, 27 Sept. 1982, p. 3, cols. 1-2.

[9] Reported on The Nightly Business Report, PBS, week of 21 Feb. 1983.

TRAINING OF LANGUAGE EDUCATORS FOR BUSINESS LANGUAGE COURSES

by

Dr. Maude S. Walther

Associate Professor of French
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures
Purdue University
West Lafayette, Indiana 47907

Training of Language Educators for Business Language Courses

by Maude S Walther

or

Business Language Courses and the Wisdom of Insecurity

We should honestly recognize that we have added to our curricula business language courses because it had become more and more difficult to fill our literature courses. There is nothing magic about the various formulae we have developed. The need to survive made us very creative, but also uneasy: guilty of having compromised with our principles, aware of having opened a breach in our ivory tower. The result has been a complex approach to our training in unknown territories. Reluctant to seriously consider the nitty-gritty of our new enterprise, we have too often abused ourselves or been abused thinking that we were dealing with high matters such as economics or politics. We have hidden our basic task behind a brilliant, often nationalistic terminology which has done nothing for our preparation of class instruction. We might as well honestly recognize, once and for all, that we offer our business language courses as a service to our students, who have to fight harder and harder for a place in the real world. We must, therefore, accept the responsibility of spending some time acquiring a basic knowledge of business concepts and commercial transactions.

I remember the experience of one of my former students who had graduated prior to our offering of the course on Business French, who was so pleased to have been hired by a French bank and who was confronted the very first day of employment with an incredible problem: her boss asked her to get him a "chemise". She understood "shirt" and was appalled by his request. He was asking, of course, for a folder.

I do not think there is anything wrong in trying to place our courses in a general political and social context: however, too many so-called "training sessions" of faculty desiring to teach a business course have been spent on such matters--matters too often presented with a definite biased point of view: that of corporations--to the detriment of what is really needed.

What we must know, before going to our classrooms are the basic functioning structures of the business world. I personally had to learn those keys the hard way and had to fill my lacuna on a day-to-day basis. This is why I proposed last year to the French Cultural Services a seminar that would bring together professors and representatives of the French business world--not to hear about the grandeur of international commerce, not to spend time praising the beauty of our endeavor, but to learn how business is, in fact, conducted in France; to learn what it takes to successfully complete business transactions such as opening or closing a company, buying stocks, importing and exporting merchandise, etc. I do believe that in a matter of a few days it is possible to acquire a basic knowledge of the signified which makes us so much more at ease when we present the signifier to our students. In these training sessions, we can never be concrete enough: we have to assume that professors of languages and literatures know nothing about the way business transactions are conducted because it is the reality of the situation. Having learned this even more so through the experience I had last year with my first training seminar, I am asking our speakers this year to be even more specific and to describe step-by-step the commercial operations they accomplish everyday. What can be more fascinating than to learn how the check we write today will actually end up in our creditor's account in some remote French village?

Some aspects of business transactions which I believe not to be obvious to most of us are the following:

I. General notions of company structures:
   1. Legal definition of the word enterprise
   2. Internal organization of concerns according to size (in French: "organigramme")
   3. Description of the various departments: administrative, commercial, accounting, advertising, etc.

II. Various types of companies according to financing:
   1. A one-man/woman company (proprietorship)
   2. Partnership (general, limited)
   3. Incorporation
   4. A holding company

III. Creation and liquidation of a company
   1. Administrative and legal procedures to follow
   2. Bankruptcy: voluntary/compulsory liquidation--responsibilities, consequences, etc.

IV. Creation of a business
   1. Capital assets and intangible assets
   2. Leases: how to take on a lease, how to cancel; right to cancel
   3. Contracts

V. Role of banks in business transactions
   1. Different types of banking accounts
   2. Different types of credits (in French, difficult notions of "escompte", "lettre de change", "credit-bail", etc.)

VI. Stock Exchange terminology and regulations
   1. Different types of stocks, bonds (in French, "actions", "obligations", etc.)
   2. Different types of markets, market prices
   3. Difference between stated and market value of stocks and bonds

VII. System of taxes

VIII. Commercial bookkeeping

IX. National budgeting

X. Basic computer terminology

This is to name but a few aspects of the business world which should be known to us, instructors of business language courses. The result is by no means demeaning. Such information has a direct effect on our own lives by

opening our minds and making us feel less manipulated by the machines that our societies have built up over the centuries around our acquired need to make and spend money. We should not be ashamed of dealing with such matters if, in the process of learning the concepts hidden behind a technical terminology, we can understand better the world surrounding us. Is this not the task of humanists?

TEACHING CULTURE TO BUSINESS STUDENTS:
AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH

by

Dr. Carolyn V. Bell

Assistant Professor of Spanish
Buena Vista College
Storm Lake, Iowa 50588

Teaching
Culture to Business Students: An Anthropological Approach

In the last several years we as language instructors have been urged, forced or coerced into the teaching of culture as a part of the language classroom experience. Rather than debate the question of whether we should add all these sidelines to language teaching and learning I believe I can shed some light on a different approach to teaching culture. I believe you will find this approach valid for teaching in English or another language, in the business as well as foreign language classroom.

As a result of a NEH consultancy grant, Buena Vista College and I have been privileged to work with Dr. Claire Gaudiani of the University of Pennsylvania. She has been instrumental in the development of the ideas I am presenting today and has material which will be coming out shortly through the Northeast Foreign Language Association. I do not take any credit for the development of this material. I am only a bearer of news, so to speak, and one who can speak for the validity of the approach as I am successfully using it now.

Until recently most culture lessons consisted of capsules limited to a specific country, or, a person's individual experiences with a foreign culture were recounted and called culture. Semana Santa in Spain is an example of the type of capsule we have been teaching. Granted, this is a celebration unique to the hispanic culture, one of beauty, one of special significance. It is however an isolated event which does not in reality carry over to the everyday religious expression of the people of Spain, nor those of other hispanic countries. Truely, if we are to gain an understanding of the significance of religion and the role of the church in Spain, we must look beyond the "special" events. Neither can we allow ourselves the luxury of recounting

our personal experiences in foreign countries and saying that that is "culture".

If you pick up any introductory textbook in anthropology you will find that societies as cultures are dealt with in terms are certain universal concepts. The use of these particular concepts permits anthropologists to study different cultures and societies from a comparative point of view. I believe you will find this approach helpful since it is extremely difficult to point out all the differences that occur culturally among a large number of societies or regions. If you're studying Spanish you have a minimum of 17 countries to consider; French offers a wide variety of countries from French Canada to Senegal in Africa to French communities in Southeast Asia. Russian presents us a country as enormous and varied as our own.

The idea I present is that we discuss the culture of our area studies in an orderly fashion by using the following universal concepts.

a) The Concept of Time: Each language expresses time in such a way that their world can be better understood, if we can comprehend this concept. In French "on passe le temp", in Spanish "pasamos el tiempo", whereas in English "time is spent".

b) Concept of Progress: What exactly does progress mean to you and me in America with all our advanced computer technology? How does that compare then, to an Hispanic, Israeli, or Senegalese concept of progress? What do their societies undergo to achieve "Progress". We need to understand one's concept of progress in the world, progress on the job, both individually and company-wise.

c) The Concept of a Higher Being: Here we discuss religions' role in our societies, the major differences and perhaps the similarities. What is the role of religion in these

societies with whom we are doing business? What role does the church play? What standards or morality come into play? How will we conduct business relationships with someone whose religious values we either don't understand or misinterpret?

d) The Concept of Power: For a businessman this is one concept of great significance since one may or may not engage in business deals from a power point of view. It is necessary to understand one's need for ego compensation. Power can be seen from three points of view as we study our various societal groups: 1-governmental power, 2-military power, 3-individual power. All three need to be carefully understood as one sets up and carries on business in another country. Under this heading we need also to discuss nationalism and its impact on business transactions.

e) The Concept of Beauty: In general we are able, here, to deal with the very broad category of "The Arts", perhaps touching specifically on individuals who have had a significant impact on a particular society. It allows us to look at what a society values with respect to its efforts to preserve archelological and anthropological findings. It permits the business person to evaluate a values system with which he/she is going to deal. An interesting concept is that of the lines on a car. In France the Citroen is, to my point of view, a particularly ugly car with blunt lines and an awful

choice of colors. That same car was absolutely rejected by the Japanese public because its lines are distinctly in the shape of a dragon and frightful to children. If we are going to sell a product to a foreign country, it's helpful to understand their values.

f) The Concept of Life Cycle: This very broad area permits us to study the values associated with birth through marriage through death. All of these ideas are of significant importance in whatever society we choose to study. A business person must understand how to react to a client's family situation. Do, in fact, the births, marriages, and death of his family come before his/her business relationships? Will you, as a company representative be accepted if your divorce, mixed marriage, or common-law relationship is brought to light?

g) Directly related is the Concept of the Family and the Kinship System. What does family mean to your client? Is "family" nuclear or extended? What are the expected sibling relationships? What role do grandparents play? Is there a "compadre" system as in Central and South America or is it every individual for him/her self? We must gain a relatively firm understanding of this very basic element of our client's societies if we are to proceed in the so-called "niceties" that precede many business transactions. Business transactions can be jeopardized or helped depending on one's ability or failure to understand the family.

h) The Concept of Good and Bad. In recent years the U.S. has been confronted with full scale bribery cases taking place in several countries. It has often been in total agreement with the accepted concept of good and bad of the country where the bribes took place. In other countries, including our own, these bribes have not been acceptable. As I have stated before - one must understand the value system of a particular country if one is to do business within that system.

The significance of this approach, it is believed, is that it encourages analytical comparative thought on the part of our students. This is achieved by presenting the materials concerning the area being studied without necessarily overtly stating the equivalent position in our own society or in other societies with which our students may be familiar. Instead of us giving detailed lectures on American society, reading and writing assignments should be developed which will encourage the student to recognize and analyze the comparative value systems. We ask the question, doing the job we know most effectively how to do; that is, challenging the students to tap the available resources and to develop an analytical thought process.

Now you are perhaps saying, how can I possibly cover "the concept of a higher being" in a country such as India where Muslins are massacred by Hindus; how can I teach the concept of power in Latin America when a country such as Bolivia has had more heads of states than it has years of independence from Spain? And what is time, anyway, for a South American Indian compared to a modern, westernized oil magnate from Venezuela?

My experiences show me that if I can deal in major concepts of religion, then break it down by using specific and varied examples, I will be on the right track. It appears that the previous approach has worked in the opposite direction. Terpstra's book explains religions of the world. What is a Hindu?

A Muslin? A Buddhist? Is the great difference between Spanish Catholicism and American Catholicism the mystical element? Maybe we can gain an understanding as to why Israelis and Arabs find peace so difficult to attain. But we need to know what peace means to an Israeli - and to the different factions of the Arab world. Why can't the U.S. impose its will successfully on Vietnam, Cuba - wherever? The answer is that our values systems are different and until we a) understand other peoples' value systems, b) develop attitudes accordingly we shall be forever doomed to the repeat our failures in our efforts to "modernize" underdeveloped countries.

As our businesses go forth trying to earn money and sell a product, they will surely need a firm understanding of the languages with which they come in contact. But, it is a sad misconception that knowledge of a language will assure a successful business arrangement. I leave you with the notion that there is a small school of thought which believes that if we understood the culture and values systems of other societies and did not speak their language, dependent as it were on interpreters, we would not do poorly at all in solidifying business transactions.

THE LANGUAGE TEACHER AS CROSS-CULTURAL TRAINER: APPROACHES

by

Professor William Schwab

Department of Linguistics
Oakland University
Rochester, Michigan 48063

American corporate executives engaged in transnational business have become increasingly aware of the need for greater knowledge of cross-cultural processes and orientation to the target culture in which they have to work. This need is partly the result of difficulties and failures in cross-cultural transactions involving losses of contracts as well as early returns of company personnel from overseas assignments. The bottom line then involves dollar losses, both of potential profits and expenses amounting to well over one hundred thousand dollars for each premature return of an overseas corporate officer. Various kinds of orientation training programs are therefore indicated, and the foreign language teacher is particularly well equipped to become a trainer in such programs.

By orientation programs we do not mean the airline type of brochures full of information of practical facts, which of course have their important uses. Rather, we are concerned with cross-cultural processes and their goals of behavioral and attitudinal modifications for inter-personal encounters in different cultures. Competence in these areas involves the cognitive, and more importantly, the affective and behavioral domains between the native, in this instance American culture, and the host culture. The distinctive characteristics of such orientation programs lie in the constant cross-referencing between two cultures rather than in an exclusive concern with just the target culture. We are therefore not concerned with area studies type programs or abbreviated courses in, let us say, Chinese or Japanese culture. The concept of 'cross-

cultural processes' has its own motivations, and recognition of this is evidenced by the increasing number of academic institutions mounting programs in this field. In Southeastern Michigan alone, for example, symposia, seminars and workshops with cross-cultural themes are being offered by the University of Michigan, The University of Detroit, Oakland University, and Eastern Michigan University through this conference.

Felt needs provide opportunities, and foreign language teachers can effectively prepare themselves as trainers for orientation seminars for business and industry. They are well suited for such a task both as educators and as experts in a foreign culture. But they must retrain themselves, since training seminars call for imperatives quite unlike those in the academy. In the remainder of this paper, I shall address five major areas of concerns to the foreign-language teacher as cross-cultural trainer. There are others, but these loom perhaps as the most important.

First of all, it is necessary to shift from being 'educators' to becoming 'trainers'. Since a considerable amount of what foreign language teachers do in the language classroom is training, the goal becomes one of sorting out familiar language skills and learning new ones. But the concept of training rather than educating is a profoundly important one. At a transnational business workshop at the SIIC (Stanford Institute for Intercultural Communication), July 25-30, 1982, at Stanford University, the participants, who included a fair number of language teachers, were invited to list characteristics associated with both education and training.

Responses to the former included cognitive knowledge, modes of reasoning, learning, analysis and synthesis. For 'training' they included behavioral and functional skills. Education is knowledge-oriented; training, skills-oriented. For a training program to be effective, it must of course be based on up-to-date knowledge of the field as well as on research. The difference is one of focus, though for certain academicians the transition from educator to trainer is a substantial one. Our teaching as educators impels us to explain, to document, and to speculate; the businessman as client wants to get things done -- now. He is not interested primarily in explanatory adequacy, which we value highly in our profession. He is schedule-oriented.

Besides the challenge to shift gears into a 'training' mode, we must develop an unusually sharp awareness of time as a commodity in our design of a training program. We have to specify goals as well as expected outcomes not only of the seminar as a whole, but of each segment, or module. If one of the seminar objectives is increased communicative effectiveness and knowledge of strategies through skillful uses of an interpreter, then the module addressing this topic must list specific objectives and stated outcomes in addition to general goals. These might include a) awareness of differences between a translator and interpreter, b) different role expectations of an interpreter on the part of two negotiating teams, such as Americans and Japanese, and c) certain rules of thumb on the efficient use of an interpreter; that is, what to do and what not to do. Specific statements of objectives and expected

Outcomes in a seminar reflect the high value of schedules that obtain in the business and corporate sector. Time is indeed money.

A third consideration in designing an effective training seminar involves modes of instruction. Traditional formats such as lecture and discussion, a luxury we particularly relish in our literature classes, must be minimized and supplemented by other modes, such as the use of case histories, critical incidents, as well as role-playing exercises, which are already common in the foreign language classroom. Case studies, we may recall, have been used in medical and law schools for hundreds of years. They were taken over as "an analytical learning technique" more than fifty years ago by the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration.[1] In intercultural processes, the case method can serve as a basis for developing important skills through simulation. No right and wrong answers are provided. Rather the participant and small client groups develop their own responses that usually reveal the cultural parameters of communicative processes. A case study can provide an enormous amount of information about successful business transactions across cultures or those that have ended in failure. For example, a case study of an unsuccessful U.S.-Japan joint venture could reveal that the seeds of failure were contained in such apparently peripheral factors (to Americans) as aesthetic appeal of a chemical product, the selection of a young corporate chief executive, and company objectives that differed markedly from the foremost American goal of making a profit for the corporation.[2] Case studies, if not readily available for a parti-

cular country, can be easily adapted from books or business journals.

Critical incidents are similar to case studies in that no single right answer is provided by the writer. They differ from one another in that the critical incident presents an interaction between individuals from different cultural groups, illuminating different cultural perceptions. The refusal (from one point of view) of a Japanese negotiating team immediately to respond to a yes/no question by its American counterpart has one meaning to the uninitiated Americans and quite another to the Japanese. Critical incidents have various uses, among the most important perhaps stimulating focused discussion on differences in cultural perceptions.

A brief comment about role-play: perhaps the new aspect of this familiar exercise is the shortness of a training seminar, which allows only for brief simulations, such as the presentation of a name card in a Japanese business setting or of prolonged silence as a response to an urgent bid by an American business team to its Japanese counterpart to agree to an American proposal. A caution about the use of role plays: the situations in which they are used should be entirely non-threatening to participants.

Closely related to the matter of training techniques is up-to-date software. An adequate, though by no means wide, range of films and videotapes on cross-cultural behavior is available commercially, but foreign embassies and commercial missions such as JETRO (Japanese External Trade Organization) provide a wealth of materials gratis or

for a nominal sum. On the other hand, foreign training films on how to do business with Americans seem impossible to get hold of, if indeed they exist. They would allow us to study cross-cultural interactions from a foreign perspective, enabling us to see ourselves as others see us.

In addition to films, up-to-date publications can be purchased from sources such as BYU (Brigham Young University) Center for International and Area Studies Publications Service, or 'Updates' on individual countries produced by the Intercultural Press, Chicago.[3] Computer searches can also yield useful information.

A fifth consideration for an effective seminar involves sound evaluative instruments. These may range from an open-ended form requesting participants to respond freely to the presentations to detailed instruments that attempt to measure the relative effectiveness of each module and each presenter, as well as the usefulness of various instructional techniques, the overall impact of the seminar, and specific actions a participant might take as a result of the seminar.[4] With a well-designed evaluation instrument, the program can undergo continuous sharpening, insuring constant quality control.

There are other considerations in preparing a successful seminar. Time allows for two other observations: 1) We have referred to the foreign language teacher as a cross-cultural trainer. In point of fact, a training program inevitably involves more than one trainer. We should therefore speak of a cross-cultural training 'team' and all that the term 'team' entails: total cooperation among the pre-

senters and advisers, if any. Theirs must be a carefully planned and orchestrated program concerned not only with the individual presentations themselves, but with introductions, transitions, and guided discussions as these will occur. And there must be a sense of credibility as well. Each cross-cultural training team should have a native speaker of the target language and a representative from the corporate sector with extensive experience in the target culture.

2) Perhaps most important for the foreign language teacher, if not the most unsettling, is that in a seminar of short duration -- one or two days -- there is no time really to 'teach' the target language. That is obvious. In any segment concerned with language and communication. language teaching and learning has to be incidental to the more immediate purpose of illuminating the underlying values and behaviors that obtain in the target culture. The Japanese word 'meiji', the 'business card', is a useful term to know, but even more important is its cultural significance as a reflector of Japanese hierarchical social structure. Exchange of the meiji is important not only as a courtesy or business etiquette, but it is absolutely necessary for the participants of a transaction so that they can address each other appropriately with the correct degree of politeness. Language instruction, with the exception of simple formulas such as greetings or expressions of politeness, should be left for another place and another time. The American going abroad with no language training at all can perhaps purchase a cassette or two and take it aboard his plane as he flies toward his destination.

And if he is lucky enough to sit next to a native speaker of the host culture, he may not even have to play the cassette.

References

[1] Robert T. Moran, "Utilizing the Case Method in Intercultural Communication" in Davey, William G., ed., Intercultural Theory and Practice: A Case Method Approach (SIETAR: Washington, D.C., 1981), p. Vii.

[2] See Case Studies of California Firms Attempting to Penetrate Japanese Markets (compiled by the San Francisco Japan Trade Center, 1982, unpub.

[3] See also George W. Renwick, ed., The Management of Intercultural Relations in International Business: A Directory of Resources (Intercultural Press, 1982).

[4] See George W. Renwick, Evaluation Handbook for Cross-Cultural Training and Multicultural Education (Intercultural Network, n.d.).

THE LANGUAGE TEACHER AS CROSS-CULTURAL TRAINER: TOPICS

by

Lucinda Hart-González

Department of Linguistics
Oakland University
Rochester, Michigan 48063

The Language Teacher as Cross-Cultural Trainer: Topics

American Business is coming to grips with the fact of well-developed international competition. Coupled with the internationalization of American manufacturing, this means an increasing need for business personnel who can function effectively in an alien culture. Unfortunately, the current international status of English and the de-emphasis on foreign language in American schools have resulted in few professionals who include foreign language, or even culture-area studies in their training.

The obvious solution, mastery of a foreign language, is not always a realistic goal for mature professionals who have completed their schooling and have little time or inclination to invest in retraining. This non-technical discussion addresses four of many possible areas of cross-cultural communication which foreign language teachers are well suited to address, when actual language teaching is not feasible: 1) language-linked cultural information, 2) high-frequency verbal expressions, 3) non-verbal communication, and 4) speaking through an interpreter.

Language-Linked Cultural Information

There are two quite simple ways in which cultural knowledge is linked to the language. First, knowledge of the verbal formulas of common social rituals presupposes awareness of the rituals such as greetings and leave-taking. Some typical rituals involved in cross-cultural business would include introductions, the arranging, opening, conducting, and closing of meetings, telephone etiquette, eating etiquette, offers, and agreements.

Language teachers often present common ritual formulas early in the teaching to allow students to become comfortable and automatic with them. In the process, the learner becomes aware that politeness can take many cultural forms and begins to form a sense of cultural relativity while learning extremely useful communication patterns. In most (but not all) cultures, the ability to handle simple rituals is appreciated as a courtesy. If such formulas are learned, however, the person should also know how to say that he or she does not speak that language. Even in cultures where this nominal use of the language is not welcomed, knowledge of the rituals can prevent the outsider from interrupting them inappropriately.

There is also a certain amount of vocabulary which is essential for functioning in the foreign context. The obvious examples are the names of food dishes and monetary units. These have no true, culturally equivalent translation and that in itself is an important cross-cultural concept for the monolingual to grasp.

The concept of non-translatability can be used to advantage in cross-cultural training by using the foreign terms instead of deceptive translations for culture-specific items and customs. For example, the custom of gift-giving in Japan is contextually different from in the United States. By describing the custom in terms of omiyage rather than gift, the trainer underlines the difference and focuses the learner's attention on the non-parallel aspects of the custom. The same is true of the Japanese meiji in contrast with the American business card and now archaic calling card.

High-Frequency Verbal Expressions

As one adapts to the foreign setting, the astute observer becomes aware of certain often repeated verbal expressions. These and cognates in languages related to English may have meanings quite apart from what the learner suspects.

Teachers of European languages all have a list of the so-called "False Friends", cognates which sound like their English cousins but mean something else. To these we might add the culture-specific modifications of predictable translations. A cafe-teatro in Peru is not the equivalent of a 'dinner-theatre'; it will offer drinks and burlesque comedy, but no food or coffee and the adult humor is a defining feature.

Some of the highest frequency expressions in conversation are 'yes' and 'no', and these are used quite differently in different cultures. In Japanese, hai 'yes' agrees and iie 'no' disagrees regardless of the form of the preceding utterance, e.g. "You don't want this?" "Yes, I don't"/ "No, I do." English speakers, on the other hand, use no to agree with a negative. In India and many Asian cultures, it is altogether impolite to disagree with someone. As a result, a yes/no question or a request will invariably elicit a 'yes' answer regardless of the facts or the speaker's intention.

American listeners frequently use variants of yes and no as backchannel fillers. That is, they indicate that the listener understands and agrees and prompt the speaker to continue. In Japan, hai also indicates understanding, but not necessarily agreement. In Latin America, these backchannel fillers have the same

meaning as in English but are used less frequently. Too frequent use might be interpreted as sarcasm or impatience.

Another valuable group of high-frequency expressions are the titles and pronouns of address and self-reference. They can provide valuable clues to the ordering of social relationships in a foreign culture, when they are recognized. Even languages such as Spanish which delete pronouns also use them with some frequency. Some languages have honorific suffixes for names or verbs, such as -ji in Hindi or -san in Japanese. Language teachers should know whether their language has a sufficiently simple pronoun system or set of titles and honorifics which a learner can pick up quickly without learning verb conjugations.

Nonverbal Communication

President Reagan was recently televised on his South American tour greeting the President of Colombia by kissing him on both cheeks. This is not an American custom, so it must have been an attempt at cross-cultural savior faire. Unfortunately, it failed. The Colombian President recoiled visibly. This French greeting is not shared by Latin Americans, whose greeting kiss on a single cheek is customary only between the sexes on social occasions and not between heads of state on formal occasions. The President could have profited greatly from expert cross-cultural briefing on nonverbal communication.

Gesture, intonation, posture, and other nonverbal cues form an integral part of communication both in conjunction with the

spoken word and as independent signs. Language teachers, as expert cross-cultural communicators, can call on their own awareness of such cues as distance between speakers, use and avoidance of eye contact, hand gestures including seeming non-gestures such as putting one's hands in one's pockets, on or below the table, looking at one's watch, etc.

At least three potential problems can be alleviated by cross-cultural training in nonverbal communication. First, American stereotypes of gesture must be suspended since they interfere with true assessment of character and personality. For example, an American might lose interest in someone who "talks with his hands", since we stereotype this behavior as "lack of culture". Silence may be misinterpreted as aloofness or lack of interest, or awkwardness.

Tone languages like Chinese lack the intonation patterns we use to distinguish questions, emphasis, and emotion. The American stereotype of the "inscrutable Chinese" is due in part to this factor. Even in intonation languages, the appropriate use of pitch and volume can vary widely. An American may easily misinterpret an Arabic speaker as belligerent due to loudness and the presence of certain postvelar consonants that are absent in English. Some intonation patterns may be carried over into English by the bilingual foreigner with disastrous results for the unaware. Farsi and Russian, for example, give high pitched stress to the negative element in a sentence. In English, this sounds like arguing or denial, rather than simple negation.

Second, these misinterpretations of nonverbal cues may conflict with the interpreter's reported message causing the American to doubt the speaker's sincerity, the interpreter's ability and allegiance or both. Since the kind of negotiation a businessman may be expected to do requires strategic choices based on perception of the situation, this sort of error may be critical. Yet uninformed perception may be diametrically opposed to what actually has happened. We have touched on the intricacies of yes/no. For large parts of the Indian subcontinent, the 'yes' prompt is uh uh similar to our 'no'. The Turkish gesture for 'no', an upward jut of the head with a tongue click, resembles our up and down nod for 'yes' more closely than it does our sideways headshake for 'no'.

Finally, the untrained American may, unwittingly cause embarassment or distance by ignorant use of inappropriate gestures.

Speaking Through an Interpreter

Most training information on using interpreters focuses on the need for pre-encounter preparation. This includes hiring an interpreter in advance, supplying him or her with a technical bilingual glossary, if available, on the relevant topic, providing a copy of any formal written presentation, arranging nonverbal cues for repetition and controlling speed, and even seeking advice on the cultural appropriateness of presentation formats and protocol.

There is another aspect of speaking through an interpreter

which is often neglected. For the unpracticed, this kind of speaking is something akin to having a delayed echo. The disruption of the normal rhythm of conversation can be completely disabling. Also, the inexperienced monolingual often falls prey to the misconception that interpretation is a simple mechanical process.

The types of cross-cultural topics we have been discussing should help dispel the notion of mechanical translation. In terms of speaking spontaneously, however, the learner must become aware of when he or she is using idiomatic expressions, as these may be the least translatable.

The problem of disrupted rhythm can be eased by practice drills of mock interpretation. The teacher paraphrases in English what the learner says at the same rate as an interpreter would translate. In the course of paraphrasing, he or she can point out by stopping or through "misinterpretation" the inappropriate use of idioms or pauses. The learner needs to be made aware of appropriate pausing places depending on the word order of the target language. For example (learner) "There are certain details that we need to talk about". (mock interpreter) "Certain we need to talk about details are." A pause between the head noun and relative clause (i.e. between details and that) in a language with subject-object- verb word order is useless and awkward since in the target language the relative clause will have to precede the head noun. The language teacher, with a little practice, can become fluent in mock interpretation.

A minimum objective of cross-cultural training must be to make the trainee aware that differences exist and can lead to misinterpretation or impropriety. A more positive objective is to achieve effective interpretation of at least some of the verbal cues to culture and social roles and the nonverbal cues to personality, intentions, and feelings.

Language teachers should have access to audio and video tapes which can be used in training to analyze and interpret intonation, speaker distance, eye contact, and gesture. Tapes of American interaction may be used as a point of departure. A good test of observation skill is to interpret the nature and feeling of interactions between Americans and between members of the target culture from video tapes with the sound track shut off. Video or audiotapes in the foreign language can be used to help in aural recognition of verbal cues.

Language teachers are also masters of practice drill techniques which make a learner familiar with new habits. New behaviors which might be drilled include appropriate speaker distance, eye contact, bowing or nodding, the use or avoidance of specific hand gestures and facial expressions, and mock interpretation. Such techniques can be practiced in English with rehearsed dialogues or spontaneous role playing.

A final word concerning adaptation to foreign cultures. In some societies, particular behaviors are governed by elaborate social rules. In such cases, it is advisable to be familiar with

appropriate "outsider's behavior". A culture may or may not appreciate a visitor trying to adopt its norms. Particularly if the new behavior is complicated or requires a certain status that visitors do not have, it may be preferable to acknowledge a foreign custom without imitating it. A visitor to Japan, for instance, is better off nodding briefly than trying to figure out how long and how low to bow to whom. The foreign language teacher, as a native of that language community or as an experienced outsider, is well equipped to advise trainees on how or whether to modify their own verbal and nonverbal behavior.

DEFINING AND MEASURING FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY IN PROGRAMS FOR BUSINESS

by

David V. Hiple

Project Director
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
385 Warburton Avenue
Hastings-on-Hudson, New York 10706

and

Kathryn Buck

Carl Duisberg Society
356 W. 23rd Street
New York City, New York 10011

Defining and Measuring Foreign Language Proficiency in Programs for Business

Conference on Foreign Languages for Business
Eastern Michigan University

April 9, 1983

David V. Hiple
Kathryn Buck

"Applicant should be fluent in one or more of the following languages..." "...must be fully bilingual." "Knowledge of Portuguese preferred." "Excellent skills in both German/English are necessary." "Working knowledge of Arabic/Hebrew required." What does the employer really mean when specifying such employment requirements? How do applicants interpret them? What provisions is the foreign language profession making to clarify this job market shorthand?

The proficiency-based approach to foreign language assessment evolved in the government sector and has been adapted for academic purposes by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and the Educational Testing Service (ETS). Some form of foreign language proficiency measurement has been in use in government for over twenty-five years, but the evolution of proficiency rating scales has been a gradual one. Liskin-Gasparro (1) recounts that the National Mobilization and Manpower Act of 1952 led to the first rudimentary descriptions of linguistic proficiency levels for government employees. In 1955 the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) embarked on a more specific program to better identify the foreign language skills of its personnel, and the original descriptions were refined. In the next decade, the descriptions grew in sophistication and spread to other government agencies, including Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Language School, Defense Language Institute

(DLI), and Peace Corps. Representatives of these agencies met in 1968 to standardize these proficiency-based level definitions; now known as the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) definitions, these rating scales serve as the norms for language proficiency ratings in government.

To date, the modality receiving the greatest attention has been oral proficiency, and the measure developed to evaluate oral ability was an interview. Lowe (2) explains that "the oral interview is a face-to-face test of a candidate's foreign language speaking ability when talking to two trained testers" (or in the academic context, usually one trained tester) "for a period of 10 to 40 minutes. The resulting speech sample is then rated on a scale of 0 (for no practical ability to function in the language) to 5 (for ability equivalent to that of an educated native speaker) with pluses given for performance stronger than halfway to the next level."

Proficiency ratings are routinely used for job classification and language-related assignments in government, and in some cases, salary increments are linked to proficiency ratings. By defining a job as requiring Level 2 (Advanced) oral proficiency (or reading proficiency, or writing proficiency, or listening proficiency -- depending on the job) the vagueness and confusion resulting from the use of such terms as "fluent," "bilingual," and "working knowledge" is eliminated. In addition to being useful to the supervisor, these proficiency rating scales are also useful to the job applicant; the applicant understands from the outset what is expected and can better estimate whether he or she has the required proficiency.

How might language proficiency ratings serve the non-government, business sector? Suppose a job applicant presents a document indicating that he or she is a Level 2 (Advanced) speaker of a target language. By referring to the rating definitions, the employer could confirm that a Level 2 (Advanced) speaker can satisfy limited work requirements and can perform the linguistic functions of narration and description expressing past, present, and future time with relative accuracy. With this information, the employer would be able to routinely judge whether the applicant in question is able to sell microcomputers in Mexico, send a telex to Japan or properly greet Saudi VIP's at the airport. The steady rise in the number of multi-national corporations and the increase in trade between US companies and foreign concerns indicate that the climate may be right for the utilization of proficiency-based credentials in business and industry. Yet it may be unrealistic to expect such a process to be institutionalized in business until it is first institutionalized in academia and articulated from the classroom to the work place.

Until fairly recently, relatively few educators outside of government were familiar with the oral interview and the rating scale, and little effort was made to explore its use in academic institutions, but in 1979 ETS received funding from the Department of Education to explore the possibility and desirability of establishing a "common yardstick" to describe performance in one or more language skills in the non-government academic environment (3). After careful investigation of existing proficiency scales in the United States, Europe, and Japan, it was decided that commitment to some form of the 0-5 government scale was advisable, but it

was furtner decided that some adaptions of the ILR scale would be necessary if it was going to have a meaningful academic application. It was agreed that the government scale would have limited use in the academic environment because it does not discriminate finely enough at the lower end of the scale where most academic and professional language learners cluster. A study by John B. Carroll (4) in 1967 indicated that the average proficiency of graduating foreign language majors in US colleges and universities was about Level 2 or 2+. The results of this study corresponded with field research gathered by FSI some years earlier. By conducting an on-the-job language needs assessment of foreign service personnel, FSI determined that most professional language needs could be satisfied by Level 3 proficiency or even lower. Thus, it was felt that there would probably be little need for academic users to discriminate between Levels 3+ - 5 proficiency.

As a result, an academic scale was proposed which addressed these differences but, at the same time, conformed to the structure of the ILR scale. The relationship between the government proficiency scale and the academic proficiency scale is presented below. (Complete level descriptions can be found in Appendix A.)

ILR SCALE	ACTFL/ETS SCALE
5 native or bilingual proficiency	superior
4 +	
4 distinguished proficiency	
3 +	
3 professional proficiency	
2 +	advanced plus
2 limited working proficiency	advanced
1 +	intermediate – high
1 elementary proficiency	intermediate – mid
	intermediate – low
0 +	novice – high
0 no practical proficiency	novice – mid
	novice – low

Concurrent with the ETS Common Yardstick Project, a second, broader activity was taking place. In April 1978, the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies was appointed to make recommendations on how to improve national competence in these areas. The Commission formally submitted its report in October 1979, and among the principal recommendations was the suggestion that a national criteria and assessment program be developed to create foreign language proficiency tests for the profession. (5)

Building upon the Common Yardstick Project and the President's Commission Report, a major cooperative effort was launched. This effort centered on ACTFL, ETS, CIA Language School, and DLI. ACTFL had also kept abreast of the proficiency-related activities being carried out in the Common Yardstick Project, and in 1981 ACTFL was awarded two grants by tne Department of Education tc address some of the recommendations of the President's Commission Report and to carry on with the work initiated by ETS.

The first project was funded to create academically-oriented generic, or language-general, proficiency guidelines in speaking, listening, reading, writing, and culture. Language-specific guidelines in French, German, and Spanish were then to be written using the generic model. After the final meeting of the ETS Common Yardstick Project in October 1981, ETS turned over to ACTFL the expanded descriptions of oral proficiency for Levels 0 and 1. These were to serve as the cornerstone of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. The principal project participants joined with an expanded group of academics for the creation of these guidelines presented in their entirety in Appendix B.

The second project enabled ACTFL to train academics to administer and rate oral proficiency interviews at their own institutions. Using the ACTFL/ETS rating scales, postsecondary educators of French, German, Italian, and Spanish have been trained in intensive workshops to conduct interviews and rate their students' oral proficiency. The postworkshop phase of the training included conducting and rating additional interviews and sending these cassette-recorded interviews to experienced trainers for feedback on elicitation technique and rating accuracy. These initial testing workshops have been modeled, to some extent, after the FSI Testing Kit Workshops conducted for academics in 1979 and 1980 (6). A trainers workshop was funded to prepare academics to train their colleagues in oral proficiency interviewing and rating, and thus reduce dependency on government trainers and make it possible for greater numbers of academics to receive training. Subsequent projects include a grant from National Endowment for the Humanities to conduct a regional summer proficiency institute for secondary school teachers and a grant from Exxon Education Foundation to establish a Regional Proficiency Center for research, training, and proficiency-based curriculum development.

What are the implications of these proficiency projects for academic foreign language programs? Clearly, the oral proficiency test is an assessment tool, but its potential to affect curriculum is also great. Educators who have undergone training in oral proficiency interviewing and rating often report that the training has influenced their teaching by bringing about a proficiency-based approach to instruction with an emphasis on oral skills, and the Proficiency Guidelines are intended to facilitate such a reorientation.

Students begin foreign language study with high expectations; one that is too often not met is the expectation of learning to speak the language. Brickell and Paul (7) discovered that foreign language teachers feel that conversational practice is one aspect that is most lacking in their own training. It is not surprising, then, that little actual conversation actually takes place in many classes. Lowe (8) points out that even in so-called conversation courses, exams are often pencil-and-paper tests. He goes on to suggest that since students tend to learn only what is tested, they do not learn to converse, even if that is their self-stated goal. The result is frustration or failure and lack of a sense of accomplishment. A proficiency-based approach to foreign language instruction, with increased emphasis on oral skills, will go a long way toward addressing this expectation gap.

What are the implications of these proficiency projects for language instruction in business and industry? Let us look at how the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines are being used in one corporate business German program. This German program model has provided for full-time, on-site instruction and consulting services according to the company's immediate and long-range needs. Since 1979 the program has included courses in reading technical documents and work in the four skill areas tailored to individual job assignments, and language instruction and cultural orientation courses for professionals preparing for transfer abroad or who have some form of frequent contact with German colleagues. Aside from those professionals whose needs remain very narrowly defined, participants have stressed three areas of foreign language competence that they feel are important: 1) basic social and business situations; 2) basic

economics and business terms, in addition to a deeper knowledge of terms of their specific field; 3) basic current events.

For the participant/learner, proficiency-based instruction means a more efficient, structured curriculum, and increased understanding of and participation in the learning process. For example, in addition to using the oral interview as a rating procedure, the trainer can use the taped interview to analyze and discuss the rating with the participant, assessing strengths and weaknesses. This enables the participant and trainer to evaluate performance and progress, to set individual and group goals, and to define objectives for further study.

In the last few months, a number of oral proficiency interviews have been conducted at the model pilot program site; although each of the interviewer's questions has a specific linguistic function and ultimately the interviewer needs to reach a level of "linguistic breakdown," the interviewees reported feeling at ease with the interview itself. The importance of the opportunity for extended conversation was cited as being significant in building confidence. During the interview, an interviewer may utilize any of a series of prepared role-playing situations. The situations, defined in the native language to avoid providing necessary target language vocabulary and structures, are used either as "level checks" to confirm a rating or as "probes" to test the next higher proficiency level. Role plays range from very basic survival situations, to situations with a complication, to difficult situations and very abstract linguistic tasks. This device can offer the business program a valuable opportunity to define and focus learning on the

basis of participants' immediate needs and past experiences, and for participants to assist the trainer in areas where a lack of personal experience would otherwise be a disadvantage. Using the existing sample role play situations, participants would define situations based on their expertise and experience, situations which could then be used for practice, expansion and variation, for writing dialogues and exercises, and ultimately for the creation of instructional materials for related audiences.

Since initiating a proficiency-based approach in this model corporate program, a number of subtle changes have occurred among the participants at the work place. Most program participants seem more willing to take risks by initiating and attempting to sustain conversations in German. For example, one advanced beginner, who is in a carpool with a native speaker, reports having begun taking advantage of this opportunity by attempting to converse more fully in German during the daily commute. Several others relate initiating more frequent and more comfortable conversations with native German colleagues.

Program participants are not only changing their practical conversation habits, however; they seem to be more carefully evaluating their performances in these exchanges and approaching the task of language learning with a new sense of purpose. Feedback from oral interviews and practice with role playing situations seems to have provided the participants themselves with a new system for noting areas of weakness for further study and/or review.

Thus the oral proficiency interview has served first as an important motivator. It is to be expected that the learning curve (or the motivation curve) will be steep at first, but an instrument

such as the oral interview can help to bring learners beyond the linguistic plateaus they inevitably reach, plateaus which are particularly frustrating in non-intensive, long-term programs without such achievement/assessment structures as semester exams or grades. In addition, there will also be an impact on curriculum, methods, and materials. For example, participants in the model corporate program are becoming interested in creating and practicing role play situations based on their work and business travel experiences. Thus the trainer's job of curriculum design and day-to-day planning is made easier and the participants are given more access to an understanding and structuring of the learning process.

The many benefits of the oral proficiency interview to the program participants have been outlined above. Benefits to the trainer/instructor are equally numerous. The oral interview functions as an assessment tool for placement, progress, diagnosis of learning goals, and overall program effectiveness, and as an organizing principle in program design and in the selection and design of materials and media.

Immediate benefits to the corporation include the ability to quantify both individual participant progress as well as the effectiveness of the training program. Long-range corporate applications include the use of proficiency-based criteria in job descriptions and advertisements, performance appraisal, international relocation and project planning, and human resource and organizational development.

The goal of the model corporate language training program is, of course, to make personnel more proficient in the target

language and more successful in their professional endeavors. One of the natural applications of the ACTFL Proficiency Projects, and of the oral proficiency interview in particular, is to facilitate language training and assessment in the business community. There is no way to quantify the competitive edge and personal respect awarded to the businessperson who demonstrates an ability to enter into transactions with foreign counterparts in their native language. Yet, while proficiency in a foreign language is desirable, it is not necessarily an automatic panacea to international business negotiation. Van Zandt (9) states that, "International businessmen, no matter where sent, normally find that their accomplishments and personal contentment are in direct proportion to the amount of time they give to the studying of the foreign country in which they work. The ambitious ones, therefore, devote a substantial part of their spare time to learning about the history, geography, language, politics, economy, customs, and manners of the host country."

The concept communicated in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines is that culture knowledge is a legitimate skill area at least as important as the traditional linguistic skill areas. In this context, the oral proficiency interview is not only an exercise of linguistic value, but also one of cultural value. If the simulated role play situations are vehicles for practicing and discussing appropriate strategies for dealing with native speakers of the target language, and if, as has happened in the model program discussed above, the oral interview encourages language users to converse more readily with native speakers, we can only assume that

not only will foreign language proficiency increase, but greater receptivity to foreign cultures and greater facility to act appropriately in these cultures will also emerge.

The profession is in the fortunate position of being able to build on extensive government experience in measuring language proficiency. By taking advantage of this experience, the foreign language profession will be able to articulate the learning process and track language learners/users throughout their academic careers and linguistically facilitate their entrance into the working world. The quantification of speaking, listening, reading, writing, and culture knowledge needs to take place, and tests need to be developed to measure proficiency in each of these skill areas. Only by improving the effectiveness of foreign language instruction and by quantifying in a useful way the actual language skills of these learners will we be able to credibly market foreign language programs to a broader audience in business and industry.

NOTES

1. Liskin-Gasparro, Judith. (Forthcoming.) "The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines: History of Development" in Proficiency: The Organizing Principle, ed. Theodore V. Higgs. (The ACTFL Foreign Language Education Series.) Lindenwood, IL. National Textbook Co. (forthcoming).

2. Lowe, Pardee Jr. 1980. Manual for LS Interview Workshops. Washington, D.C. CIA Language School. p. I-4.

3. A Common Metric for Language Proficiency, Final Report for Department of Education Grant No. G008001739: 1981. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service. (ETS Common Yardstick Project.)

4. Carroll, John B. 1967b. "Foreign Language Proficiency Levels Attained by Language, Majors Near Graduation from College." Foreign Language Annals I. No. 2. (1967): 131-51.

5. Strength Through Wisdom: A Critique of U.S. Capability. A Report to the President From the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies (Washington: Superintendent of Documents. 1979).

6. Adams, Marianne Lehr and James R. Frith, eds. 1979. Testing Kit; French and Spanish. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government. Department of State. Foreign Service Institute. 149 pp. + sample audiotapes.

7. Brickell, Henry M. and Regina H. Paul, "Ready for the '80s: A Look at Foreign Language Teachers and Teaching at the Start of the Decade," Foreign Language Annals, vol. 15, 1982, pp. 169-84.

8. Lowe, Pardee Jr. 1980. Manual for LS Interview Workshops. Washington, D.C.: CIA Language School. 255 pp.

9. Van Zandt, Howard. New Facts About Japanese and Americans. Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co., Inc., pp. 5-6.

ILR GOVERNMENT DEFINITIONS: ORAL PROFICIENCY

NO PRACTICAL PROFICIENCY

S-0 Uses a few isolated words and phrases which have no practical application. Unable to participate even in a very simple conversation.

ELEMENTARY PROFICIENCY

S-1 Able to satisfy routine travel needs and minimum courtesy requirements. Can ask and answer questions on very familiar topics; within the scope of very limited language experience can understand simple questions and statements, allowing for slowed speech, repetition or paraphrase; speaking vocabulary inadequate to express anything but the most elementary needs; errors in pronunciation and grammar are frequent, but can be understood by a native speaker used to dealing with foreigners attempting to speak the language; while topics which are "very familiar" and elementary needs vary considerably from individual to individual, any person at the S-1 level should be able to order a simple meal, ask for shelter or lodging, ask and give simple directions, make purchases, and tell time.

LIMITED WORKING PROFICIENCY

S-2 Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements. Can handle with confidence but not with facility most social situations including introductions and casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family, and autobiographical information; can handle limited work requirements, needing help in handling any complications or difficulties; can get the gist of most conversations on non-technical subjects (i.e., topics which require no specialized knowledge) and has a speaking vocabulary sufficient to respond simply with some circumlocutions; accent, though often quite faulty, is intelligible; can usually handle elementary constructions quite accurately but does not have thorough or confident control of the grammar.

PROFESSIONAL PROFICIENCY

S-3 Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics. Can discuss particular interests and special fields of competence with reasonable ease; comprehension is quite complete for a normal rate of speech; vocabulary is broad enough so that the speaker rarely has to grope for a word; accent may be obviously foreign; control of grammar good; errors never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker.

DISTINGUISHED PROFICIENCY

S-4 Able to use the language fluently and accurately on all levels normally pertinent to professional needs. Can understand and participate in any conversation within the range of own personal and professional experience with a high degree of fluency and precision of vocabulary; would rarely be taken for a native speaker, but can respond appropriately even in unfamiliar situations; errors of pronunciation and grammar quite rare; can handle informal interpreting

NOVICE—HIGH

Able to satisfy immediate needs using learned utterances. There is no real autonomy of expression, although there may be some emerging signs of spontaneity and flexibility. There is a slight increase in utterance length but frequent long pauses and repetition of interlocutor's words still occur. Can ask questions or make statements with reasonable accuracy only where this involves short memorized utterances or formulae. Most utterances are telegraphic and word endings are often omitted, confused, or distorted. Vocabulary is limited to areas of immediate survival needs. Can differentiate most phonemes when produced in isolation but when they are combined in words or groups of words, errors are frequent and, even with repetition, may severely inhibit communication even with persons used to dealing with such learners. Little development in stress and intonation is evident.

INTERMEDIATE—LOW

Able to satisfy basic survival needs and minimum courtesy requirements. In areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics, can ask and answer simple questions, initiate and respond to simple statements, and maintain very simple face-to-face conversations. When asked to do so, is able to formulate some questions with limited constructions and much inaccuracy. Almost every utterance contains fractured syntax and other grammatical errors. Vocabulary inadequate to express anything but the most elementary needs. Strong interference from L, occurs in articulation, stress, and intonation. Misunderstandings frequently arise from limited vocabulary and grammar and erroneous phonology but, with repetition, can generally be understood by native speakers in regular contact with foreigners attempting to speak their language. Little precision in information conveyed owing to tentative state of grammatical development and little or no use of modifiers.

INTERMEDIATE—MID

Able to satisfy some survival needs and some limited social demands. Some evidence of grammatical accuracy in basic constructions, e.g., subject-verb agreement, noun-adjective agreement, some notion of inflection. Vocabulary permits discussion of topics beyond basic survival needs, e.g., personal history, leisure-time activities. Is able to formulate some questions when asked to do so.

INTERMEDIATE—HIGH

Able to satisfy most survival needs and limited social demands. Developing flexibility in a range of circumstances beyond immediate survival needs. Shows some spontaneity in language production but fluency is very uneven. Can initiate and sustain a general conversation but has little understanding of the social conventions of conversation. Limited vocabulary range necessitates much hesitation and circumlocution. The commoner tense forms occur but errors are frequent in formation and selection. Can use most question forms. While some word order is established, errors still occur in more complex patterns. Cannot sustain coherent structures in longer utterances or unfamiliar situations. Ability to describe and give precise information is limited. Aware of basic cohesive features (e.g., pronouns, verb inflections), but many are unreliable, especially if less immediate in reference. Extended discourse is largely a series of short, discrete utterances. Articulation is comprehensible to native speakers used to dealing with foreigners, and can combine most phonemes with reasonable comprehensibility, but still has difficulty in producing certain sounds in

Appendix B

ACTFL

PROVISIONAL

PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES

This project

A DESIGN FOR MEASURING AND COMMUNICATING
FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

was funded by a grant (#G008 103203)
from the International Research and Studies Program
of the U.S. Department of Education

ACTFL has been interested in promoting the notion of proficiency-based foreign language teaching and learning for some time. In 1981 the ACTFL Executive Council targeted language proficiency as one of the organization's priority areas. Grants from the Department of Education have enabled ACTFL to provide training workshops on oral proficiency interviewing and rating, based on techniques endorsed by the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) and modified by ACTFL and Educational Testing Service for academic application. The first workshop was held in early 1982, and participants report having begun incorporating the techniques acquired in the workshop into their teaching.

Evolving in tandem with the work in oral proficiency interviewing and rating is a second project, also funded by the Department of Education, to create proficiency guidelines for the other modalities. Modeled on the rating descriptions used in the oral interview, these guidelines address speaking, listening, reading, writing, and culture. They are designed to guide curriculum and materials development as well as to provide a graduated sequence of learning goals for teachers and students. These guidelines will serve as the basis for future training workshops, funded by National Endowment for the Humanities and Department of Education, in which oral interview training will be coordinated with proficiency-based curriculum design.

There is great potential for the impact of these guidelines on foreign language instruction. Measurable proficiency goals will form the basis for curriculum planning and classroom teaching. Students will more quickly develop a sense of accomplishment and will be able to refer to these "yardsticks" to measure their progress. The complex problem of articulation, the coordination of content between grade and course levels, can also begin to be addressed. Student evaluation and placement can be based on actual language proficiency instead of on inaccurate and relatively uninformative measures of "seat time." It is important to stress that the guidelines are not meant to be a substitute for methodology. On the contrary, they may be used with a range of methodologies, techniques, materials and texts and should, therefore, be more appropriately regarded as an organizing principle or system.

You are encouraged to experiment with these guidelines in your daily teaching and to share them with your colleagues. To aid ACTFL in perfecting these provisional guidelines and in developing proficiency guidelines in additional languages, please review the guidelines and return the inserted questionnaire. ACTFL looks forward to receiving your comments and your suggestions.

ACTFL would like to thank the following educators who worked so diligently to create these guidelines:

Sabine Atwell
Jeannette D. Bragger
Raymonde Brown
Kathryn Buck
James Child
Ray T. Clifford
Barbara F. Freed
Gail Guntermann
Charles R. Hancock
Juana A. Hernández
Theodore V. Higgs
Nancy A. Humbach
Joseph Labat
Dale L. Lange*
Nina Levinson
Judith E. Liskin-Gasparro*
Helene Z. Loew
Pardee Lowe, Jr.*
Frankie McCullough
Howard L. Nostrand
Alice C. Omaggio*
June K. Phillips*
Micheline Ponder
Claus Reschke
Jean-Charles Seigneuret
Dagmar Waters
Eugene Weber

*Language Coordinator

ACTFL would also like to thank James Frith, Julia Petrov, and Richard T. Thompson for their support of this project. Special acknowledgment goes to Protase E. Woodford for the part he has played for many years in promoting proficiency-based teaching and learning.

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
385 Warburton Avenue
Hastings-on-Hudson, New York 10706

C. Edward Scebold, Executive Director
David V. Hiple, Project Director
Martha Garam, Project Assistant
Deborah Boylan, Production Assistant

Provisional Generic Descriptions—Speaking

Novice—Low

Unable to function in the spoken language. Oral production is limited to occasional isolated words. Essentially no communicative ability.

Novice—Mid

Able to operate only in a very limited capacity within very predictable areas of need. Vocabulary limited to that necessary to express simple elementary needs and basic courtesy formulae. Syntax is fragmented, inflections and word endings frequently omitted, confused or distorted and the majority of utterances consist of isolated words or short formulae. Utterances rarely consist of more than two or three words and are marked by frequent long pauses and repetition of an interlocutor's words. Pronunciation is frequently unintelligible and is strongly influenced by first language. Can be understood only with difficulty, even by persons such as teachers who are used to speaking with non-native speakers or in interactions where the context strongly supports the utterance.

Novice—High

Able to satisfy immediate needs using learned utterances. Can ask questions or make statements with reasonable accuracy only where this involves short memorized utterances or formulae. There is no real autonomy of expression, although there may be some emerging signs of spontaneity and flexibility. There is a slight increase in utterance length but frequent long pauses and repetition of interlocutor's words still occur. Most utterances are telegraphic and word endings are often omitted, confused or distorted. Vocabulary is limited to areas of immediate survival needs. Can differentiate most phonemes when produced in isolation but when they are combined in words or groups of words, errors are frequent and, even with repetition, may severely inhibit communication even with persons used to dealing with such learners. Little development in stress and intonation is evident.

Intermediate—Low

Able to satisfy basic survival needs and minimum courtesy requirements. In areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics, can ask and answer simple questions, initiate and respond to simple statements, and maintain very simple face-to-face conversations. When asked to do so, is able to formulate some questions with limited constructions and much inaccuracy. Almost every utterance contains fractured syntax and other grammatical errors. Vocabulary inadequate to express anything but the most elementary needs. Strong interference from native language occurs in articulation, stress and intonation. Misunderstandings frequently arise from limited vocabulary and grammar and erroneous phonology but, with repetition, can generally be understood by native speakers in regular contact with foreigners attempting to speak their language. Little precision in information conveyed owing to tentative state of grammatical development and little or no use of modifiers.

Intermediate—Mid

Able to satisfy some survival needs and some limited social demands. Is able to formulate some questions when asked to do so. Vocabulary permits discussion of topics beyond basic survival needs such as personal history and leisure time activities. Some evidence of grammatical accuracy in basic constructions, for example, subject-verb agreement, noun-adjective agreement, some notion of inflection.

Intermediate—High

Able to satisfy most survival needs and limited social demands. Shows some spontaneity in language production but fluency is very uneven. Can initiate and sustain a general conversation but has little understanding of the social conventions of conversation. Developing flexibility in a range of circumstances beyond immediate survival needs. Limited vocabulary range necessitates much hesitation and circumlocution. The commoner tense forms occur but errors are frequent in formation and selection. Can use most question forms. While some word order is established, errors still occur in more complex patterns. Cannot sustain coherent structures in longer utterances or unfamiliar situations. Ability to describe and give precise information is limited. Aware of basic cohesive features such as pronouns and verb inflections, but many are unreliable, especially if less immediate in reference. Extended discourse is largely a series of short, discrete utterances. Articulation is comprehensible to native speakers used to dealing with foreigners, and can combine most phonemes with reasonable comprehensibility, but still has difficulty in producing certain sounds, in certain positions, or in certain combinations, and speech will usually be labored. Still has to repeat utterances frequently to be understood by the general public. Able to produce some narration in either past or future.

Advanced

Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements. Can handle with confidence but not with facility most social situations including introductions and casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family, and autobiographical information; can handle limited work requirements, needing help in handling any complications or difficulties. Has a speaking vocabulary sufficient to respond simply with some circumlocutions; accent, though often quite faulty, is intelligible; can usually handle elementary constructions quite accurately but does not have thorough or confident control of the grammar.

Advanced Plus	Able to satisfy most work requirements and show some ability to communicate on concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Generally strong in either grammar or vocabulary, but not in both. Weaknesses or unevenness in one of the foregoing or in pronunciation result in occasional miscommunication. Areas of weakness range from simple constructions such as plurals, articles, prepositions, and negatives to more complex structures such as tense usage, passive constructions, word order, and relative clauses. Normally controls general vocabulary with some groping for everyday vocabulary still evident. Often shows remarkable fluency and ease of speech, but under tension or pressure language may break down.
Superior	Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics. Can discuss particular interests and special fields of competence with reasonable ease. Vocabulary is broad enough that speaker rarely has to grope for a word; accent may be obviously foreign; control of grammar good; errors virtually never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker.

Provisional Generic Descriptions—Listening

Novice—Low	No practical understanding of the spoken language. Understanding limited to occasional isolated words, such as cognates, borrowed words, and high frequency social conventions. Essentially no ability to comprehend even short utterances.
Novice—Mid	Sufficient comprehension to understand some memorized words within predictable areas of need. Vocabulary for comprehension limited to simple elementary needs and basic courtesy formulae. Utterances understood rarely exceed more than two or three words at a time and ability to understand is characterized by long pauses for assimilation and by repeated requests on the listener's part for repetition, and/or a slower rate of speech. Confuses words that sound similar.
Novice—High	Sufficient comprehension to understand a number of memorized utterances in areas of immediate need. Comprehends slightly longer utterances in situations where the context aids understanding, such as at the table, in a restaurant/store, in a train/bus. Phrases recognized have for the most part been memorized. Comprehends vocabulary common to daily needs. Comprehends simple questions/statements about family members, age, address, weather, time, daily activities and interests. Misunderstandings arise from failure to perceive critical sounds or endings. Understands even standard speech with difficulty but gets some main ideas. Often requires repetition and/or a slowed rate of speed for comprehension, even when listening to persons such as teachers who are used to speaking with non-natives.
Intermediate—Low	Sufficient comprehension to understand utterances about basic survival needs, minimum courtesy and travel requirements. In areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics, can understand non-memorized material, such as simple questions and answers, statements, and face-to-face conversations in the standard language. Comprehension areas include basic needs: meals, lodging, transportation, time, simple instructions (e.g., route directions) and routine commands (e.g., from customs officials, police). Understands main ideas. Misunderstandings frequently arise from lack of vocabulary or faulty processing of syntactic information often caused by strong interference from the native language or by the imperfect and partial acquisition of the target grammar.
Intermediate—Mid	Sufficient comprehension to understand simple conversations about some survival needs and some limited social conventions. Vocabulary permits understanding of topics beyond basic survival needs such as personal history and leisure time activities. Evidence of understanding basic constructions, for example, subject-verb agreement, noun-adjective agreement; evidence that some inflection is understood.
Intermediate—High	Sufficient comprehension to understand short conversations about most survival needs and limited social conventions. Increasingly able to understand topics beyond immediate survival needs. Shows spontaneity in understanding, but speed and consistency of understanding uneven. Limited vocabulary range necessitates repetition for understanding. Understands commoner tense forms and some word order patterns, including most question forms, but miscommunication still occurs with more complex patterns. Can get the gist of conversations, but cannot sustain comprehension in longer utterances or in unfamiliar situations. Understanding of descriptions and detailed information is limited. Aware of basic cohesive features such as pronouns and verb inflections, but many are unreliably understood, especially if other material intervenes. Understanding is largely limited to a series of short, discrete utterances. Still has to ask for utterances to be repeated. Some ability to understand the facts.

Advanced	Sufficient comprehension to understand conversations about routine social conventions and limited school or work requirements. Able to understand face-to-face speech in the standard language, delivered at a normal rate with some repetition and rewording, by a native speaker not used to dealing with foreigners. Understands everyday topics, common personal and family news, well-known current events, and routine matters involving school or work; descriptions and narration about current, past and future events; and essential points of discussion or speech at an elementary level on topics in special fields of interest.
Advanced Plus	Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social conventions, conversations on school or work requirements, and discussions on concrete topics related to particular interests and special fields of competence. Often shows remarkable ability and ease of understanding, but comprehension may break down under tension or pressure, including unfavorable listening conditions. Candidate may display weakness or deficiency due to inadequate vocabulary base or less than secure knowledge of grammar and syntax. Normally understands general vocabulary with some hesitant understanding of everyday vocabulary still evident. Can sometimes detect emotional overtones. Some ability to understand between the lines, i.e., to make inferences.
Superior	Sufficient comprehension to understand the essentials of all speech in standard dialects, including technical discussions within a special field. Has sufficient understanding of face-to-face speech, delivered with normal clarity and speed in standard language, on general topics and areas of special interest; understands hypothesizing and supported opinions. Has broad enough vocabulary that rarely has to ask for paraphrasing or explanation. Can follow accurately the essentials of conversations between educated native speakers, reasonably clear telephone calls, radio broadcasts, standard news items, oral reports, some oral technical reports, and public addresses on non-technical subjects. May not understand native speakers if they speak very quickly or use some slang or unfamiliar dialect. Can often detect emotional overtones. Can understand "between the lines" (i.e., make inferences).

Provisional Generic Descriptions—Reading

Novice—Low	No functional ability in reading the foreign language.
Novice—Mid	Sufficient understanding of the written language to interpret highly contextualized words or cognates within predictable areas. Vocabulary for comprehension limited to simple elementary needs such as names, addresses, dates, street signs, building names, short informative signs (e.g., no smoking, entrance/exit) and formulaic vocabulary requesting same. Material understood rarely exceeds a single phrase and comprehension requires successive rereading and checking.
Novice—High	Sufficient comprehension of the written language to interpret set expressions in areas of immediate need. Can recognize all the letters in the printed version of an alphabetic system and high-frequency elements of a syllabary or a character system. Where vocabulary has been mastered can read for instruction and directional purposes standardized messages, phrases or expressions such as some items on menus, schedules, timetables, maps and signs indicating hours of operation, social codes, and traffic regulations. This material is read only for essential information. Detail is overlooked or misunderstood.
Intermediate—Low	Sufficient comprehension to understand in printed form the simplest connected material, either authentic or specially prepared, dealing with basic survival and social needs. Able to understand both mastered material and recombinations of the mastered elements that achieve meanings at the same level. Understands main ideas in material whose structures and syntax parallel the native language. Can read messages, greetings, statements of social amenities or other simple language containing only the highest frequency grammatical patterns and vocabulary items including cognates (if appropriate). Misunderstandings arise when syntax diverges from that of the native language or when grammatical cues are overlooked.
Intermediate—Mid	Sufficient comprehension to understand in printed form simple discourse for informative or social purposes. In response to perceived needs can read for information material such as announcements of public events, popular advertising, notes containing biographical information or narration of events, and straightforward newspaper headlines and story titles. Can guess at unfamiliar vocabulary if highly contextualized. Relies primarily on adverbs as time indicators. Has some difficulty with the cohesive factors in discourse, such as matching pronouns with referents. May have to read material several times before understanding.
Intermediate—High	Sufficient comprehension to understand a simple paragraph for personal communication, information or recreational purposes. Can read with understanding social notes, letters and invitations; can locate and

derive main ideas of the introductory/summary paragraphs from high interest or familiar news or other informational sources; can read for pleasure specially prepared, or some uncomplicated authentic prose, such as fictional narratives or cultural information. Shows spontaneity in reading by ability to guess at meaning from context. Understands common time indicators and can interpret some cohesive factors such as objective pronouns and simple clause connectors. Begins to relate sentences in the discourse to advance meaning, but cannot sustain understanding of longer discourse on unfamiliar topics. Misinterpretation still occurs with more complex patterns.

Advanced	Sufficient comprehension to read simple authentic printed material or edited textual material within a familiar context. Can read uncomplicated but authentic prose on familiar subjects containing description and narration such as news items describing frequently occurring events, simple biographic information, social notices, and standard business letters. Can read edited texts such as prose fiction and contemporary culture. The prose is predominantly in familiar sentence patterns. Can follow essential points of written discussion at level of main ideas and some supporting ones with topics in a field of interest or where background exists. Some misunderstandings. Able to read the facts but cannot draw inferences.
Advanced Plus	Sufficient comprehension to understand most factual information in non-technical prose as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to special interests. Able to read for information and description, to follow sequence of events, and to react to that information. Is able to separate main ideas from lesser ones, and uses that division to advance understanding. Can locate and interpret main ideas and details in material written for the general public. Will begin to guess sensibly at new words by using linguistic context and prior knowledge. May react personally to material but does not yet detect subjective attitudes, values, or judgments in the writing.
Superior	Able to read standard newspaper items addressed to the general reader, routine correspondence reports and technical material in a field of interest at a normal rate of speed (at least 220 wpm). Readers can gain new knowledge from material on unfamiliar topics in areas of a general nature. Can interpret hypotheses, supported opinions and conjectures. Can also read short stories, novels, and other recreational literature accessible to the general public. Reading ability is not subject-matter dependent. Has broad enough general vocabulary that successful guessing resolves problems with complex structures and low-frequency idioms. Misreading is rare. Almost always produces correct interpretation. Able to read between the lines. May be unable to appreciate nuance or stylistics.

Provisional Generic Descriptions—Writing

Novice—Low	No functional ability in writing the foreign language.
Novice—Mid	No practical communicative writing skills. Able to copy isolated words or short phrases. Able to transcribe previously studied words or phrases.
Novice—High	Able to write simple fixed expressions and limited memorized material. Can supply information when requested on forms such as hotel registrations and travel documents. Can write names, numbers, dates, one's own nationality, addresses, and other simple biographic information, as well as learned vocabulary, short phrases, and simple lists. Can write all the symbols in an alphabetic or syllabic system or 50 of the most common characters. Can write simple memorized material with frequent misspellings and inaccuracies.
Intermediate—Low	Has sufficient control of the writing system to meet limited practical needs. Can write short messages, such as simple questions or notes, postcards, phone messages, and the like within the scope of limited language experience. Can take simple notes on material dealing with very familiar topics although memory span is extremely limited. Can create statements or questions within the scope of limited language experience. Material produced consists of recombinations of learned vocabulary and structures into simple sentences. Vocabulary is inadequate to express anything but elementary needs. Writing tends to be a loosely organized collection of sentence fragments on a very familiar topic. Makes continual errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation, but writing can be read and understood by a native speaker used to dealing with foreigners. Able to produce appropriately some fundamental sociolinguistic distinctions in formal and familiar style, such as appropriate subject pronouns, titles of address and basic social formulae.
Intermediate—Mid	Sufficient control of writing system to meet some survival needs and some limited social demands. Able to compose short paragraphs or take simple notes on very familiar topics grounded in personal experience. Can discuss likes and dislikes, daily routine, everyday events, and the like. Can express past time, using

content words and time expressions, or with sporadically accurate verbs. Evidence of good control of basic constructions and inflections such as subject-verb agreement, noun-adjective agreement, and straightforward syntactic constructions in present or future time, though errors occasionally occur. May make frequent errors, however, when venturing beyond current level of linguistic competence. When resorting to a dictionary, often is unable to identify appropriate vocabulary, or uses dictionary entry in uninflected form.

Intermediate—High

Sufficient control of writing system to meet most survival needs and limited social demands. Can take notes in some detail on familiar topics, and respond to personal questions using elementary vocabulary and common structures. Can write simple letters, brief synopses and paraphrases, summaries of biographical data and work experience, and short compositions on familiar topics. Can create sentences and short paragraphs relating to most survival needs (food, lodging, transportation, immediate surroundings and situations) and limited social demands. Can relate personal history, discuss topics such as daily life, preferences, and other familiar material. Can express fairly accurately present and future time. Can produce some past verb forms, but not always accurately or with correct usage. Shows good control of elementary vocabulary and some control of basic syntactic patterns but major errors still occur when expressing more complex thoughts. Dictionary usage may still yield incorrect vocabulary of forms, although can use a dictionary to advantage to express simple ideas. Generally cannot use basic cohesive elements of discourse to advantage such as relative constructions, subject pronouns, connectors, etc. Writing, though faulty, is comprehensible to native speakers used to dealing with foreigners.

Advanced

Able to write routine social correspondence and simple discourse of at least several paragraphs on familiar topics. Can write simple social correspondence, take notes, and write cohesive summaries, resumes, and short narratives and descriptions on factual topics. Able to write about everyday topics using both description and narration. Has sufficient writing vocabulary to express himself/herself simply with some circumlocution. Can write about a very limited number of current events or daily situations and express personal preferences and observations in some detail, using basic structures. Still makes common errors in spelling and punctuation, but shows some control of the most common formats and punctuation conventions. Good control of the morphology of the language (in inflected languages) and of the most frequently used syntactic structures. Elementary constructions are usually handled quite accurately, and writing is understandable to a native speaker not used to reading the writing of foreigners. Uses a limited number of cohesive devices such as pronouns and repeated words with good accuracy. Able to join sentences in limited discourse, but has difficulty and makes frequent errors in producing complex sentences. Paragraphs are reasonably unified and coherent.

Advanced Plus

Shows ability to write about most common topics with some precision and in some detail. Can write fairly detailed resumes and summaries and take quite accurate notes. Can write most social and informal business correspondence. Can describe and narrate personal experiences and explain simply points of view in prose discourse. Can write about concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Normally controls general vocabulary with some circumlocution. Often shows remarkable fluency and ease of expression, but under time constraints and pressure language may be inaccurate and/or incomprehensible. Generally strong in either grammar or vocabulary, but not in both. Weaknesses and unevenness in one of the foregoing or in spelling result in occasional miscommunication. Areas of weakness range from simple constructions such as plurals, articles, prepositions, and negatives to more complex structures such as tense usage, passive constructions, word order, and relative clauses. Some misuse of vocabulary still evident. Shows a limited ability to use circumlocution. Uses dictionary to advantage to supply unknown words. Writing is understandable to native speakers not used to reading material written by non-natives, though the style is still obviously foreign.

Superior

Able to use the written language effectively in most formal and informal exchanges on practical, social, and professional topics. Can write most types of correspondence, such as memos and social and business letters, short research papers and statements of position in areas of special interest or in special fields. Can express hypotheses, conjectures, and present arguments or points of view accurately and effectively. Can write about areas of special interest and handle topics in special fields, in addition to most common topics. Good control of a full range of structures, spelling, and a wide general vocabulary allow the writer to convey his/her message accurately, though style may be foreign. Can use complex and compound sentence structures to express ideas clearly and coherently. Uses dictionary with a high degree of accuracy to supply specialized vocabulary. Errors, though sometimes made when using more complex structures, are occasional, and rarely disturb the native speaker. Sporadic errors when using basic structures. Although sensitive to differences in formal and informal style, still cannot tailor writing precisely and accurately to a variety of audiences or styles.

Provisional Generic Descriptions—Culture

Novice

Limited interaction. Behaves with considerateness. Is resourceful in nonverbal communication, but is unreliable in interpretation of nonverbal cues. Is limited in language, as indicated under the listening and speaking skills. Lacks generally the knowledge of culture patterns requisite for survival situations.

Intermediate

Survival competence. Can deal with familiar survival situations and interact with a culture bearer accustomed to foreigners. Uses behavior acquired for the purpose of greeting and leave-taking, expressing wants, asking directions, buying food, using transportation, tipping. Comprehends the response. Makes errors as the result of misunderstanding; miscommunicates, and misapplies assumptions about the culture.

Advanced

Limited social competence. Handles routine social situations successfully with a culture bearer accustomed to foreigners. Shows comprehension of common rules of etiquette, taboos and sensitivities, though home culture predominates. Can make polite requests, accept and refuse invitations, offer and receive gifts, apologize, make introductions, telephone, purchase and bargain, do routine banking. Can discuss a few aspects of the home and the foreign country, such as general current events and policies, as well as a field of personal interest. Does not offend the culture bearer, but some important misunderstandings and miscommunications occur, in interaction with one unaccustomed to foreigners. Is not competent to take part in a formal meeting, or in a group situation where several persons are speaking informally at the same time.

Superior

Working social and professional competence. Can participate in almost all social situations and those within one vocation. Handles unfamiliar types of situations with ease and sensitivity, including some involving common taboos, or other emotionally charged subjects. Comprehends most nonverbal responses. Laughs at some culture-related humor. In productive skills, neither culture predominates; nevertheless, makes appropriate use of cultural references and expressions. Generally distinguishes between a formal and informal register. Discusses abstract ideas relating the foreign to the native culture. Is generally limited, however, in handling abstractions. Minor inaccuracies occur in perception of meaning and in the expression of the intended representation, but do not result in serious misunderstanding, even by a culture bearer unaccustomed to foreigners.

Near-Native Competence

Full social and professional competence. Fits behavior to audience, and the culture of the target language dominates almost entirely. Has internalized the concept that culture is relative and is always on the lookout to do the appropriate thing. Can counsel, persuade, negotiate, represent a point of view, interpret for dignitaries, describe and compare features of the two cultures. In such comparisons, can discuss geography, history, institutions, customs and behavior patterns, current events, and national policies. Perceives almost all unverbalized responses, and recognizes almost all allusions, including historical and literary commonplaces. Laughs at most culture-related humor. Controls a formal and informal register of behavior. Is inferior to the culture bearer only in background information related to the culture such as childhood experiences, detailed regional geography and past events of significance.

Native Competence

Examinee is indistinguishable from a person brought up and educated in the culture.

Provisional French Descriptions—Speaking

Novice—Low

Unable to function in spoken French. Oral production is limited to occasional isolated words or expressions which have been borrowed into English or which are cognates of English words. Some examples are: *voilà, c'est la vie, cuisine, auto, table.* Essentially no communicative ability.

Novice—Mid

Able to operate only in a very limited capacity within very predictable areas of need. Vocabulary is limited to that necessary to express simple elementary needs and basic courtesy formulae, such as *Bonjour, Au revoir, Comment allez-vous?, Très bien, merci, Je m'appelle...,* etc. Syntax is fragmented, verbs are used mostly in the infinitive form, and there is little or no subject-verb agreement or noun-adjective agreement. The majority of utterances consist of isolated words or short formulae. Utterances are marked and often flawed by repetition of an interlocutor's words (*Q: Quel sport préférez-vous? *A: Vous préférez le sport tennis.*) and frequent long pauses; speakers at this level cannot create original sentences or cope with the simplest situations. Pronunciation is frequently unintelligible and is strongly influenced by the first language. Can be understood only with difficulty, even by persons such as teachers who are used to dealing with non-native speakers or in interactions where the context strongly supports the utterances.

• Denotes an error characteristic of speakers at this level.

Novice—High

Able to satisfy immediate needs using learned utterances. There is no consistent ability to create original sentences or cope with simple survival situations, although there are some emerging signs of spontaneity and flexibility. Can ask questions or make statements with reasonable accuracy only where this involves short memorized utterances or formulae. There is some increase in utterance length, but frequent long pauses and repetition of the interlocutor's words still occur. Most utterances are telegraphic and errors often occur when word endings and verbs are omitted or confused (e.g., *Oui. *Je parle française.*). Speech is characterized by enumeration, rather than by sentences. Vocabulary is limited to common areas, such as colors, days of the week, months of the year, names of basic objects, numbers up to 60, and names of immediate family members. There is some concept of the present tense forms of the verbs and some common irregular verbs (*aimer, parler, habiter, avoir, être, vouloir, aller),* although use is limited primarily to first person singular and first and second person plural. There is some use of articles, indicating a concept of gender, although mistakes are constant and numerous. Question words are limited to *où, quand, quel, est-ce que, pourquoi, comment* and questions are often syntactically incorrect and semantically inaccurate. May be able to pronounce sounds correctly in isolation (*r, u, p, t, k, é)* but cannot do so consistently in words or sound clusters. Errors are frequent and, in spite of repetition, may severely inhibit communication even with persons used to dealing with such learners. Unable to make one's needs known and communicate essential information in a simple survival situation.

• Denotes an error characteristic of speakers at this level.

Intermediate—Low

Able to satisfy basic survival needs and minimum courtesy requirements. In areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics, can ask and answer some simple questions, can respond to and sometimes initiate simple statements, and can maintain simple face-to-face conversation. Can ask and answer questions such as *Quel âge avez-vous? Comment vous appelez-vous? Combien de frères et de soeurs avez-vous? Qu'est-ce que tu étudies?.* Can sustain a short conversation on such familiar topics as characteristics of self and family members (name, age, physical description), location and description of home, school, or workplace, and other topics that involve an exchange of simple factual information. Can make one's needs known with great difficulty in a simple survival situation, such as ordering a meal, getting a hotel room, and asking for directions. Vocabulary is inadequate to express anything beyond basic information on familiar subjects and elementary needs. Little precision in information can be conveyed and misunderstandings frequently arise because of limited vocabulary, numerous grammatical errors, and poor pronunciation and intonation. There is some control of the present tense of regular verbs and the more common irregular verbs and of gender, number, and subject-verb agreement. Can give simple answers in the negative, limited to the *ne...pas* construction. Misunderstandings frequently arise from limited vocabulary and grammar and erroneous phonology, but, with repetition, can generally be understood by native speakers in regular contact with foreigners attempting to speak French. Little precision in information conveyed owing to tentative state of grammatical development and little or no use of modifiers.

Intermediate—Mid

Able to satisfy most routine travel and survival needs and some limited social demands. Can ask and answer questions on very familiar topics and in areas of immediate need. Can initiate and respond to simple statements, and can maintain simple face-to-face conversation. Can ask and answer questions and carry on a conversation on topics beyond basic survival needs or involving the exchange of basic personal information, i.e., can talk simply about autobiographical details, leisure time activities, daily schedule, and

some future plans. In a simple situation, such as ordering a meal, making purchases, and requesting a hotel room, can deal with details, such as requesting a table for two in a quiet corner, asking for an article of clothing of a particular color, getting a hotel room with a private bath for a given length of time, or inquiring about modes of payment. Can handle simple transactions at the post office, bank, drugstore, etc. Misunderstandings arise because of limited vocabulary, frequent grammatical errors, and poor pronunciation and intonation, although speakers at this level have broader vocabulary and/or greater grammatical and phonological control than speakers at Intermediate Low. Speech is often characterized by long pauses. Some grammatical accuracy in basic constructions, i.e., subject-verb agreement, noun-adjective and gender agreement for familiar vocabulary, present tense of regular verbs and common irregular verbs such as *avoir, être, aller, faire, vouloir, pouvoir, savoir, devoir, comprendre.* Can express future time using *aller* plus infinitive. May have a concept of past time, but can use only isolated past tense forms which have been learned as vocabulary items. Syntax in most simple declarative sentences is generally correct, including placement of most common adjectives. Is generally understood by persons used to dealing with foreigners.

Intermediate—High

Able to satisfy most survival needs and limited social demands. Developing flexibility in language production although fluency is still uneven. Can initiate and sustain a general conversation on factual topics beyond basic survival needs. Can give autobiographical information and discuss leisure time activities. To a lesser degree, can talk about some past activities and future plans and non-personal topics, such as activities of organizations, and descriptions of events, although ability to describe and give precise information in these areas is limited. Can provide sporadically, although not consistently, simple description and narration of present, past, or future events, although limited vocabulary range and insufficient control of grammar lead to much hesitation and inaccuracy. Extended discourse is largely a series of short, discrete utterances; cannot sustain coherent structures in longer utterances by the use of conjunctions or relative clauses. Some control of the *passé composé* and basic reflexive verbs. May be able to use some direct and indirect object pronouns, although syntax may still be faulty. Is able to use the partitive (affirmative and negative), demonstrative adjectives, most expressions of quantity, most adverbs, and some idiomatic expressions with *avoir* and *faire.* Comprehensible to native speakers used to dealing with foreigners, but still has to repeat utterances frequently to be understood by the general public.

Advanced

Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements. Can handle with confidence but not with facility most social and general conversations. Can narrate, describe, and explain in past, present, and future time. Can communicate facts—what, who, when, where, how much—and can explain points of view in an uncomplicated fashion, but cannot conjecture or coherently support an opinion. Can talk in a general way about topics of current public interest (e.g., current events, student rules and regulations), as well as personal interest (work, leisure time activities) and can give autobiographical information. Can make factual comparisons, such as college life vs. high school life. Can handle limited work requirements, needing help in handling any complications or difficulties. Can make a point forcefully and communicate needs and thoughts in a situation with a complication (e.g., calling a mechanic for help with a stalled car, explaining suspicious-looking possessions to a customs official). Has a speaking vocabulary sufficient to respond simply with some circumlocutions. Can be understood by native speakers not used to dealing with foreigners, in spite of some pronunciation difficulties. Can usually handle elementary constructions quite accurately, such as the present, *passé composé,* imperfect, future tenses of regular and irregular verbs. Has good control of the reflexive and impersonal form of verbs and of imperatives. However, use of conditional sentences is minimal and very unstable. Is able to use adjectives (including *tout,* comparative and superlative forms) correctly, and can handle object pronouns (one pronoun only), interrogative pronouns, relative pronouns, negative patterns other than *ne...pas,* most prepositions and idiomatic expressions using *depuis* with past tense and *il y a* (ago). Generally syntax is correct and word order is sustained with all pronouns, including *y* and *en.* Grasps but does not control the basic differences in usage between the *passé composé* and the imperfect (repeated or continuous vs. single action in the past, etc.) so that many mistakes are to be expected. Can link sentences together in limited discourse by using conjunctions and subordinate clauses.

Advanced Plus

Able to satisfy most work requirements and show some ability to communicate on concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Can narrate, describe, and explain in past, present, and future time. Can communicate facts and explain points of view in an uncomplicated fashion consistently. Shows some ability to support opinions, explain in detail, and hypothesize, although only sporadically. Can discuss topics of current interest and personal interest, and can handle routine work requirements and some complications. Can handle situations involving complications that arise in everyday life (see Advanced Level examples) but will have difficulty with unfamiliar situations (e.g., losing a contact lens in a sink drain and going to a neighbor to borrow a wrench). Normally controls general vocabulary, with

some groping still evident. Speaking performance is often uneven (strong in either grammar or vocabulary, but not both, for example). Areas of weakness in grammar can range from simple constructions such as noun-adjective, gender, and subject-verb agreement to more complex structures such as tense usage (imperfect vs. *passé composé),* and relative clauses. Only sporadic ability to use the present subjunctive, which is usually limited to impersonal expressions (*il faut que, il est important que*) and *vouloir que* constructions. Is usually able to use possessive, demonstrative, and double object pronouns correctly as well as to handle the difference between *c'est* and *il est.* Often shows remarkable fluency and ease of speech, but under tension or pressure language may break down.

Superior

Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social and professional topics. Can discuss particular interests and special fields of competence with reasonable ease. Can support opinions, hypothesize, and conjecture. May not be able to tailor language to fit various audiences or discuss highly abstract topics in depth. Vocabulary is broad enough that speaker rarely has to grope for a word; good use of circumlocution. Pronunciation my still be obviously foreign. Control of grammar is good. Good control of *passé composé* vs. imperfect; uses the present subjunctive appropriately most of the time. Partial control of *si* clauses, particularly in hypothetical statements. Correct use of the future tense with conjunctions such as *quand, dès que,* etc., and good control of negations, including *ne...ni...ni,* negation of the infinitive, and *ne...que.* Errors never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker.

Provisional French Descriptions—Listening

Novice—Low

No practical understanding of spoken French. Understanding is limited to cognates, borrowed words, high frequency social conventions, and occasional isolated words, such as *oui, merci, café, magnifique, mademoiselle.* Essentially no ability to comprehend even short utterances.

Novice—Mid

Sufficient comprehension to understand some memorized words within predictable areas of need. Vocabulary for comprehension is limited to simple elementary needs, basic courtesy formulae, and very simple memorized material relating to everyday objects and situations, such as *Bonjour, Bonsoir, Comment-allez-vous? Où habitez-vous? Comment vous appelez-vous?* Utterances understood rarely exceed more than two or three words at a time, and ability to understand is characterized by long pauses for assimilation and by repeated requests on the listener's part for repetition, and/or a slower rate of speech. Confuses words that sound similar, such as *vingt/viens/vin, demain/deux mains, couture/culture.*

Novice—High

Sufficient comprehension to understand a number of memorized utterances in areas of immediate need. Comprehends slightly longer utterances in situations where the context aids understanding, such as at the table, in a restaurant/store, in a train/bus. Phrases recognized have for the most part been memorized: *Passez-moi du beurre. Avez-vous du pain? Le billet coûte 10 francs. Vous désirez?* Comprehends vocabulary common to daily needs. Comprehends simple questions/statements about family members, age, address, weather, time, daily activities and interests: *Etes-vous marié? Vous avez des enfants? Combien de frères et de soeurs avez-vous? Quel temps fait-il?* Misunderstandings arise from failure to perceive critical sounds or endings. Understands even tailored speech with difficulty but gets some main ideas. Often requires repetition and/or a slowed rate of speed for comprehension, even when listening to persons such as teachers who are used to speaking with non-natives.

Intermediate—Low

Sufficient comprehension to understand utterances about basic survival needs, minimum courtesy and travel requirements. In areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics, can understand non-memorized material, such as simple questions and answers, statements, and face-to-face conversations in standard French. Comprehension areas include basic needs: meals, lodging, transportation, time, simple instructions (e.g., route directions such as *Allez tout droit. Tournez à gauche. Allez plus loin.*) and routine commands (e.g., from customs officials, police, such as *Passez à la douane. Ouvrez vos valises*). Understands main ideas. Misunderstandings frequently arise from lack of vocabulary or from faulty processing of syntactic information often caused by strong interference from the native language or by the imperfect and partial acquisition of the target grammar.

Intermediate—Mid

Sufficient comprehension to understand simple conversations about some survival needs and some limited social conventions. Vocabulary permits understanding of topics beyond basic survival needs (e.g., personal history and leisure time activities), such as *Où êtes-vous né? Quel est votre passe-temps favori? Qu'aimez-vous faire le week-end?* Evidence of understanding basic constructions, e.g., subject-verb agreement, evidence that some inflection is understood. Candidate's understanding of grammatical structure

allows recognition of future and past references either by verb forms (*futur proche, futur, passé composé,* and *imparfait*) or by adverbs, adjectives, or prepositions of time (*bientôt, demain, hier, l'année dernière, avant, depuis*).

Intermediate—High — Sufficient comprehension to understand short conversations about most survival needs and limited social conventions. Increasingly able to understand topics beyond immediate survival needs, such as biographical information in which both *imparfait, passé composé, futur proche,* and *futur* are used (*J'habitais en France quand j'étais jeune. J'irai en France si j'ai assez d'argent*). Able to comprehend most sentences that feature familiar vocabulary and situations (home, office, school and daily activities; simple purchases; directions). Shows spontaneity in understanding, but speed and consistency of understanding uneven. Limited vocabulary range necessitates repetition for understanding. Understands commoner tense forms and some word order patterns, including most question forms, but miscommunication still occurs with more complex patterns. Can get the gist of conversations, but cannot sustain comprehension in longer utterances or in unfamiliar situations. Understanding of descriptions and detailed information is limited. Aware of basic cohesive features, e.g., pronouns, verb inflections, but many are unreliably understood, especially if other material intervenes. Still has to ask for utterances to be repeated.

Advanced — Sufficient comprehension to understand conversations about routine social conventions and limited school or work requirements. Able to understand face-to-face speech in standard French spoken at a normal rate, with some repetition and rewording, by a native speaker not used to dealing with foreigners. Able to get the gist of some radio broadcasts. Understands everyday topics, common personal and family news, well-known current events, and routine matters involving school or work; descriptions and narration about current, past and future events; the essential points of a discussion or speech at an elementary level on topics in special fields of interest. For example: *Est-ce que votre spécialité nécessite une formation particulière? Comment les Européens ont-ils réagi à l'installation des engins nucléaires en Europe? La classe moyenne est-elle la plus affectée par l'inflation?*

Advanced Plus — Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social conventions, conversations on school or work requirements, and discussions on concrete topics related to particular interests and special fields of competence. Often shows remarkable ability and ease of understanding, but comprehension may break down under tension or pressure (including unfavorable listening conditions). May display weakness or deficiency due to inadequate vocabulary base or less-than-secure knowledge of grammar and syntax. May be deficient or uneven in completely comprehending conversations or discussions by educated native speakers due to a less-than-adequate knowledge of more complex syntactic structures (tense usage in simple and complex statements, passive voice constructions, relative clauses, word order, subject-object relationships). Still has some difficulty following radio broadcasts. Can sometimes detect emotional overtones. Increasing ability to understand between the lines (i.e., to make inferences).

Superior — Sufficient comprehension to understand the essentials of all speech in standard dialects, including technical discussions within a special field. Has sufficient understanding of face-to-face speech, delivered with normal clarity and speed in standard dialects on general topics and areas of special interest; understands hypothesizing and supported opinions. Has broad enough vocabulary that rarely has to ask for paraphrasing or explanation. Can follow accurately the essentials of conversations between educated native speakers, reasonably clear telephone calls, radio broadcasts, standard news items, oral reports, some oral technical reports, and public addresses on non-technical subjects. May not understand native speakers if they speak very quickly or use some slang or unfamiliar dialect. Can often detect emotional overtones. Can understand "between the lines" (i.e., make inferences).

Provisional French Descriptions—Reading

Novice—Low — No functional ability in reading French.

Novice—Mid — Sufficient understanding of written French to interpret highly contextualized words or cognates within predictable areas. Vocabulary for comprehension limited to simple elementary needs, such as names, addresses, dates, signs indicating names of streets and avenues (*rue, voie*); building names (*café, aéroport, restaurant*); short informative signs (*entrée, danger, taxi*). Material understood rarely exceeds a single phrase and comprehension requires successive rereading and checking.

Novice—High — Sufficient comprehension of written language to interpret set expressions in areas of immediate need. Can recognize all letters of printed French (but very little which is handwritten), and is familiar with French

punctuation and diacritical marks (é, è, ô, ã, ç). Where vocabulary has been mastered, can read for instructional and directional purposes standardized messages, phrases or expressions, such as some items on menus (*poulet, bifteck, salade, thé*), schedules, timetables, maps, signs indicating hours of operation, social codes (*Défense de Fumer*), and street signs (*Arrêt Fixe*). Vocabulary and grammar limited to the most common nouns, adjectives, question words, and a few verb forms. Material is read for essential information. Detail is overlooked or misunderstood.

Intermediate—Low

Sufficient comprehension to understand in printed form the simplest connected material, either authentic or specially prepared, dealing with basic survival and social needs. Able to understand both mastered material and recombinations of the mastered elements kept to the same level. Understands main ideas in material when structure and syntax parallel the native language. Can read simple messages, greetings and social amenities in dialogues and specially prepared texts and very carefully handwritten personal notes intended for a non-native reader. Can understand simple language which contains high frequency grammatical patterns in direct discourse such as NP + VP of most regular verbs in the present tense and of common irregular verbs (*avoir, être, savoir, faire, vouloir, pouvoir, comprendre*) also in the present. Has some familiarity with common idioms such as *faire* plus an adjective for the weather, *avoir* plus age, *aller* plus adjective (for personal well-being) and *à* plus hour for time of occurrence. While the *passé composé* of the most common regular verbs might be understood, great dependence will be placed on adverbs of time for determination of tense (*demain, hier, plus tard, avant, après, à* x *heures,* etc.) and past meaning might be missed. Misunderstandings may arise when syntax is unlike that of the native language (as in inverted interrogatives especially with the *passé composé*) or when grammatical cues (of tense, number or gender) are overlooked.

Intermediate—Mid

Sufficient comprehension to understand in printed form simple discourse for informative or social purposes. In response to perceived needs, can read public announcements to determine who, what, when, where, why, and how much information about such subjects as sporting events, concerts, parades, and celebrations. Can also identify products, prices, and some conditions of sale in popular, illustrated advertising for everyday items, such as food, clothing, work or school supplies, and travel. Can comprehend a note or letter in which a writer used to dealing with non-native readers describes self and family, ages, occupations, residence, personality traits, and common preferences when high frequency or cognates and simple structures are used. Understands the general content of headlines in newspapers, such as *France-Soir,* or article titles in popular magazines, such as *Paris-Match* and *Elle,* if the content is familiar or of high interest. Understands facts and follows events in simple narration, authentic or specially prepared or edited when discourse consists of basic NP + VP + NP constructions. Can interpret negation, interrogation in various forms. Is fairly consistent in interpreting present, *futur proche (aller* + infinitive) and most *passé composé* verbs, when other time indicators (adverbial expressions) are present, but is less consistent when lexical clues are lacking. Recognizes these tenses with most regular verbs within vocabulary range and with eight to 10 most common irregulars. Understands basic noun modifiers including determiners (e.g., definite and indefinite articles, partitives, possessives, demonstratives, interrogatives) and descriptive adjectives both preceding and following, with relative ease. Has some difficulty with cohesive factors such as matching object pronouns with referents and connecting ideas expressed by relative pronouns. Uses guessing strategies to interpret vocabulary consisting of regular cognate patterns, and highly contextualized items. May have to read several times before understanding.

Intermediate—High

Sufficient comprehension to understand a simple paragraph for personal communication, information or recreational purposes. Can read with understanding invitations, social notes, personal letters and some simple business letters on familiar topics. Can identify the main ideas in two to three short paragraphs in simple articles in popular magazines (e.g., *Paris-Match, Elle, Marie-Claire*) familiar news publications (*France-Soir*) or other informational sources (e.g., publicity brochures, travel literature, and similar writing on non-technical subjects. Appreciates descriptive material on daily life and routines, biographical information. Can read for pleasure some uncomplicated authentic prose or edited prose and original poetry (e.g., Jacques Prévert) and specially prepared or edited original texts. This might include fictional narrative, description or cultural information presented in the direct discourse. Guesses at meaning from context but frequently relies on a dictionary. Can follow connected discourse with simple cohesive elements (*puis, ensuite, qui, que* and some object pronouns). Can accurately interpret detail provided by most expressions of quantity (*peu de, beaucoup de, pas de*) and most adjectives and adverbs. Can regularly and correctly interpret the use of the past, usually with the *passé composé* and occasionally with the imperfect. Common reflexive verbs are understood but most idiomatic pronominal verbs are misunderstood. Common idioms with *avoir* and *faire* are understood. Misinterpretation still occurs with more complex patterns.

Advanced	Sufficient comprehension to read simple authentic printed material or edited textual material within a familiar context. Can read uncomplicated, authentic prose on familiar subjects (sports, travel, movies, theater, food, music, current events), news items in newspapers and popular magazines, biographical information in personal letters on family topics. Reads within the limits of identifiable vocabulary some unedited texts, such as prose fiction, from carefully chosen authors, usually contemporary. Such selections might appear in Sunday newspaper supplements, other daily papers, or special anthologies on modern culture. Can usually appreciate distinctions between the *passé composé* and the *imparfait* and the future of regular and irregular verbs. Can correctly interpret compound subjects with some understanding of complex (embedded) sentences which use one object pronoun, prepositional phrases and relative pronouns. Can understand the most salient facts and supporting information but subtle nuances and inferences will remain undetected.
Advanced Plus	Sufficient comprehension to understand most factual information in non-technical prose as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to special interests. Able to read for information and description, to follow sequence of events, and to react to information read. Can separate main ideas from lesser ones and use that division to advance understanding. In major newspapers and magazines, can read international items and social and cultural news. Understanding of specialized items depends upon individual interests and background, at this level can read material in own areas of interest. Within literary fields of interest, can read non-esoteric prose, including critical articles and books. Can read signs, posters, advertisements, and public announcements. Can follow simple printed directions for cooking and other projects within areas of expertise. Guesses logically at new words by using linguistic and non-linguistic contexts and prior knowledge. Is able to comprehend most high-frequency idiomatic expressions, but will still have difficulty with figurative meanings. Can correctly interpret temporal differences as indicated by forms which differ from the native language (e.g., *depuis* and *il y a* with the present) and by the use of the *passé composé* and the *imparfait* of regular and most irregular verbs (including reflexives) as well as distinctions between the future and the *futur proche*. Will draw correct conclusions from simple *si* clauses (*si* + present + future). Although the subjunctive (with impersonals such as *il faut, il est nécessaire,* and with certain verbs of emotion, *vouloir, aimer*) is understood, as are adjectives whose meaning changes with position (*ancien professeur, professeur ancien, la semaine dernière, la dernière semaine*) the reader will still have difficulty detecting attitudes, values, and judgments. Will be sensitive to distinctions made by the use of the comparative and superlative forms and exclusions made with most negatives. Will have personal responses to written material of a literal nature (either factual information in news items or descriptive narrative in prose) but will still have difficulty with figurative meanings.
Superior	Able to read standard newspaper items addressed to the general reader, routine correspondence reports and technical material in a field of interest at a normal rate of speed (at least 220 WPM). Can gain new knowledge from material in a variety of publications on a wide range of unfamiliar topics related to fields of interest. Can interpret hypotheses, supported opinions, and documented facts, as well as figurative devices, stylistic differences, and humor. Can read most literary genres in the original: novels, essays, poetry, short stories, and most literature written for the general public. Reading ability is not subject dependent. Broad general vocabulary, knowledge of most structures, and development of strategies for logical guessing allow for successful interpretation of unfamiliar words, idioms, or structures. Verb tenses and moods have been largely mastered. Can interpret the *passé simple* as well as hypotheticals involving *si* clauses (*imparfait-conditionnel, plus-que parfait* and *conditionnel passé*) as well as the subjunctive, several passive constructions (with *être, on,* and pronominal verbs). Able to achieve overall comprehension of material, even though there may be some gaps in detail. Is generally able to comprehend facts, although misinterpretation may still occur. Can draw inferences, but may be unable to appreciate nuances or stylistics.

Provisional French Descriptions—Writing

Novice—Low	No functional ability in writing French.
Novice—Mid	No practical communicative writing skills. Able to copy isolated words and short phrases. Able to transcribe previously studied words or phrases. Able to write name, address, dates and other numbers, as well as common expressions such as those used in greetings and leave-takings.
Novice—High	Able to write simple fixed expressions and limited memorized material. Can supply information when requested on forms such as hotel reservations and travel documents. Can write names, write out numbers from 1-20, dates (days of the week, months of the year), one's own nationality as well as other common adjectives of nationality, addresses, and other simple biographic information. Can write limited learned vocabulary for common objects, short phrases, and simple lists. Can write such expressions as *Bonjour,*

Je m'appelle plus name, *Comment vas-tu? Comment allez-vous?* and other fixed social formulae. Can name some common objects; knows some common adjectives and adverbs; can use the present tense of some common *-er* verbs as well as forms of the present tense of *avoir, être,* and *aller;* can write simple negative sentences using *ne...pas* and interrogative sentences with words such as *est-ce que, où, comment, pourquoi, quand,* etc. Writes in sentences or short phrases using very basic subject-verb-object word order. Can ask and answer very simple yes-no or information questions using limited memorized or very familiar sentence patterns, with frequent misspellings and inaccuracies. Often forgets accents or uses them inappropriately. Sometimes uses infinitives for conjugated verbs. Has a concept of gender, and can produce definite and indefinite articles, though often inappropriately. Often forgets to make adjectives agree with nouns. May misplace adjectives and adverbs in sentences. Generally cannot create own sentences in the language, but uses memorized material or transformations of familiar patterns.

Intermediate—Low

Has sufficient control of the writing system to meet limited practical needs. Can write short messages, such as simple questions or notes, postcards, phone messages and the like. Can take simple notes on material dealing with very familiar topics within the scope of limited language experience. Can create statements or questions in the present tense or compound future using negative and interrogative constructions, within the scope of limited language experience. Material produced consists of recombinations of learned vocabulary and structures into simple sentences. Can express present and future time, the latter by using the present tense plus infinitive construction or the present tense and adverbs of time such as *demain, ce soir, la semaine prochaine, l'année prochaine.* For example: *J'ai un examen demain; Je vais à Paris la semaine prochaine.* Generally cannot express past time using past tenses, but may incorrectly use the present tense and an adverb of time such as *hier, hier soir, ce matin,* to convey past meaning. Uses sporadically forms such as possessive adjectives, demonstrative and interrogative adjectives, and partitive articles, but not always correctly. Vocabulary is limited to common objects and cognates, and is inadequate to express anything but elementary needs. Can express numbers from 1-100 with some misspellings. Often inserts native-language vocabulary for unknown words, and is generally not capable of circumlocution to get meaning across. Writing tends to be a loose collection of sentences or sentence fragments on very familiar topics (likes and dislikes, general routine, everyday events or situations). Makes continual errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation, but writing can be read and understood by a native reader used to dealing with foreigners. Able to produce appropriately some fundamental sociolinguistic distinctions in formal and familiar style, such as appropriate subject pronouns, titles of address and basic social formulae.

Intermediate—Mid

Sufficient control of writing system to meet some survival needs and some limited social demands. Able to compose short paragraphs or take simple notes on very familiar topics grounded in personal experience. Can discuss likes and dislikes, daily routines, give dates and times, discuss everyday events, describe immediate surroundings (home, work, school), narrate simple events, and the like. Can use correctly the present tense of most regular verbs and some common irregular verbs, such as *aller, avoir, être, faire, vouloir, pouvoir, savoir, comprendre,* etc., with occasional production errors. Can use *aller* plus infinitive to express future time. Has sporadic control of high frequency verbs in the *passé composé,* but may not attend to correct auxiliary verb or past participle agreement. Often uses *passé composé* for *imparfait* inappropriately. Can use definite, indefinite, and partitive articles, but often uses them inappropriately. Frequent errors in gender, and occasional errors in adjective agreement or placement may occur. Shows some ability to use some determiners other than articles, such as possessive adjectives or interrogative adjectives, but may make errors in appropriate choice of form. Does not tend to use object pronouns, relative constructions, or other cohesive elements of discourse, rendering the written style somewhat stilted and simplistic. Generally good control of basic constructions and inflections, such as subject-verb agreement, noun-adjective agreement, and straightforward syntactic constructions in present and future time. May make frequent errors when venturing beyond current level of linguistic competence (such as when expressing opinions or emotions, where non-memorized conditionals, subjunctives, and other advanced concepts of grammar may come into play). When resorting to a dictionary, often is unable to identify appropriate vocabulary, or uses dictionary entry in uninflected form.

Intermediate—High

Sufficient control of writing system to meet most survival needs and limited social demands. Can take notes in some detail on familiar topics (autobiographical information, preferences, daily routine, simple descriptions and narration of everyday events and situations) and respond to personal questions on such topics using elementary vocabulary and common structures. Can write simple letters, brief synopses and paraphrases, summaries of biographical data and work experience, and short compositions on familiar topics. Can create sentences and short paragraphs relating to most survival needs (food, lodging, transportation, immediate surroundings and situations) and limited social demands. Can express fairly accurately present and future time, using the *futur proche* and the present tense of most common regular and ir-

regular verbs, including reflexive verbs. Uses some common *avoir* and *faire* expressions. Can use the *passé composé* with both *avoir* and *être* auxiliaries, but does not always use it correctly or appropriately. Shows good control of elementary vocabulary and some control of basic syntactic patterns (some object pronouns, partitive and other determiners, use of *de* after negative and quantity expressions, use of negative in past tenses and *futur proche* with correct placement, etc.). Major errors still occur when expressing more complex thoughts. Dictionary usage may still yield incorrect vocabulary or forms, although can use a dictionary to advantage to express simple ideas. Generally does not use basic cohesive elements of discourse to advantage (relative constructions, object pronouns, especially *y* and *en*, connectors, and the like). Writing, though faulty, is comprehensible to native speakers used to reading French written by non-natives. Is able to express a few thoughts for which vocabulary is unknown via circumlocution, but may insert native-language equivalents for unknown words or use native-language syntactic patterns when expressing ideas beyond current level of linguistic competence.

Advanced

Able to write routine social correspondence and simple discourse of at least several paragraphs on familiar topics. Can write simple social correspondence, take notes, and write cohesive summaries, resumés, and short narratives and descriptions on factual topics. Able to write about everyday topics by using adjectives, both regular and irregular patterns (e.g., masculines ending in *-eux, -if, -al*) with mostly correct agreements and word order. Able to modify both verbs and adjectives with adverbs although word order not always correct, especially with *passé composé*. Able to narrate events using present, *passé composé*, imperfect and future forms, although the contrast between uses of the two past tenses may not be consistently accurate. Occasional use of some conditional forms to express preference and ability (i.e., *je voudr-, je pourrais...*). Has sufficient writing vocabulary to express oneself simply with some circumlocutions. Can write about a very limited number of current events or daily situations and express personal preferences and observations in some detail using basic structures. Is able to recycle new but meaningful phrases whether lexical or structural, i.e., lifts phrases appropriately, writing appears more sophisticated. When writing own thoughts, is more likely to paraphrase according to native language at times. Continues to make spelling errors where sound-symbol correspondence is radically different from English (*-ail, -eille*), where there are multiple ways of spelling a single sound (*é, ai, et...*) and with silent letters. Shows control of most elision (*l', c', m', t', qu'*) but may overgeneralize (*qui* to *qu'*) and heeds most punctuation conventions. Good control of morphology in verb tenses: correct endings for regular and irregular verbs in tenses mentioned above. Also uses correct endings for adjective agreement, and able to add *-ment* to derive adverbs from adjectives. Controls frequently used structures such as negatives, interrogatives, prepositions of location; determiners are handled accurately for form (although lapses in gender assignment occur) but there is incorrect choice as to definite, indefinite, or partitive for accurate meaning. Preposition use after verbs or adjectives is often inaccurate. Writing is understandable by a native speaker not used to reading French written by non-natives. Writer uses a limited number of cohesive devices such as a single object pronoun (direct or indirect) or *y* or *en* but does so when the repetition of the noun would be in close proximity to the original naming. Some use of *qui, que* to combine sentences and some common conjunctions are used (*parce que, quand, où*, etc.). Able to join sentences in limited discourse, but has difficulty and makes frequent errors producing complex sentences requiring tense accords (e.g., *quand* plus future, conjunctions requiring a subjunctive, *si* clauses with other than a present in the result). Paragraphs are reasonably unified and coherent.

Advanced Plus

Shows ability to write about most common topics with precision and in some detail. Can write fairly detailed resumés and summaries and take accurate notes. Can handle most informal and business correspondence. Can describe and narrate personal experiences and explain simply point of view in prose discourse by using introductory phrases [e.g., *A mon avis..., je (ne) pense (pas)...je (ne) crois (pas)...je (ne) suis (pas) sûr...*]. Can write about concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Normally controls general vocabulary with circumlocution or modification where necessary, e.g., may use negation plus lexical item for an unknown antonym, or modify words with *très, beaucoup de*, etc., if a more specific term is unknown, or resort to a category label for unknown components. Often shows remarkable fluency or ease of expression, but under time constraints (e.g., no opportunity to rewrite), and pressure (e.g., testing), language may be inaccurate and/or incomprehensible, especially if important lexical items are missing or if inaccurate tense usage interferes with meaning. Generally strong in either grammar or vocabulary, but not in both. Weaknesses and unevenness in one of the foregoing or in spelling result in occasional miscommunication. Areas of weakness may involve detail in the use of simple constructions: irregular plurals of nouns, adjectives; determiners (usage rather than form); prepositions (after verbs or adjectives); negatives (omitting one part; with *passé composé;* with multiple negators). Weaknesses are also observed in more complex structures: tense usage and sequence (*passé composé* vs. *imparfait;* sequence in *si* clauses; future after *quand, dès que*, etc.); passive constructions (rarely uses *on* or reflexive but tends to parallel English with consequent misuse of *être*); word order (especially with *passé composé* plus negation, inversion, adverbs,

double object pronouns, or adjectives where meaning affected by position); and relative pronouns (rarely attempts other than *qui/que*). Uses a range of tenses as time indicators including conditional, actual future (in addition to *futur proche*), and possibly *venir de* plus infinitive for immediate past. Some misuse of vocabulary still evident, especially when using a dictionary for words with multiple meanings or where related words carry various functions (*travailler/le travail, université/universitaire*), but does use a dictionary to advantage where a fairly direct bilingual translation and no intralingual ambiguity exists. Shows ability to use circumlocution. Writing is understandable to native speakers not used to reading material written by non-natives, though the style is still obviously foreign.

Superior

Able to use written French effectively in most formal and informal exchanges on practical, social, and professional topics. Can write most types of correspondence, such as memos, social and business letters (with appropriate formulaic introductions and closings), short research papers, and statements of position. Can express hypotheses and conjectures, and present arguments or points of view accurately and effectively. Can write about areas of special interest and handle topics in special fields. Has good control of a full range of structures so that time, description and narration can be used to expand upon ideas. Errors in basic structures are sporadic and not indicative of communicative control. In addition to simple tenses, can use compound tenses to show time relationships among events and to express ideas clearly and coherently, but errors are sometimes made when using complex structures, such as indefinite, relative, or demonstrative pronouns when a range of tenses is necessary within a relatively short discourse. Has lexical control of subordinate conjunctions. Usually employs compulsory subjunctives in the present tense and there is some evidence of the *passé composé* of the subjunctive mood. Generally does not use subjunctive in optional cases to suggest attitude of writer (e.g., after *Croyez-vous que...?*). Has a wide enough vocabulary to convey the message accurately, though style may be foreign. Uses dictionary with a high degree of accuracy to supplement specialized vocabulary or to improve content or style. Although sensitive to differences in formal and informal style, still may not tailor writing precisely or accurately to a variety of audiences (except for personal vs. business correspondence) or styles.

Provisional French Descriptions—Culture

Novice

Limited interaction. Behaves with considerateness. Is resourceful in nonverbal communication, but does not reliably interpret gestures or culturally-specific nonverbal behavior, such as physical contacts with greetings, proximity of speaker. Is limited in language (see listening/speaking guidelines), but may be able to manage short phrases of courtesy (*merci, enchanté, s'il vous plaît, pas de quoi, pardon, excusez-moi*) and basic titles of respect (*Monsieur, Madame, Mademoiselle*). Lacks generally the knowledge of culture patterns requisite for survival situations.

Intermediate

Survival competence. Can deal with familiar survival situations and interact with a culture bearer unaccustomed to foreigners. Is able to use conventional phrases when being introduced, such as *enchanté*, as well as proper greetings at different times of day, such as *Bonjour, monsieur; Bonsoir, madame; Salut* (limited to informal occasions with close friends), and leave-takings, *au revoir, à demain*. Shows comprehension of formal and informal terms of address (*vous* vs. *tu*). Can provide background information in a format appropriate to the culture, such as street designation before name (*Rue de la Paix*), and telephone number groupings in pairs in French provinces, i.e., 32-49-63. Is able to express wants in a culturally acceptable fashion in simple situations: *Je voudrais une chambre avec salle de bains; Un coca s'il vous plaît; Je voudrais envoyer cette lêttre aux Etats-Unis. C'est combien?* Understands need to go to specialty shops to buy foods, such as : *la boucherie, la charcuterie, la boulangerie, la poissonnerie, l'épicerie*. Can identify very common products, prices in local currency, and ask questions on conditions of promotion or sale, such as *Combien coûte cette écharpe?* Is aware of the use of the metric system and knows simple phrases, such as *Je voudrais un kilo de pommes*. Is aware of different meal schedules as well as the content of each: *petit déjeuner, dîner* (may be unable to describe the nature of differences between *déjeuner* and *dîner* due to regional or socioeconomic differences). Knows that public transportation has a different structure or organization, i.e.: *métro*, classes in subway train systems, conductor vs. driver. Is generally aware that tips are expected in restaurants but are sometimes included in the price (*service compris* vs. *service non-compris 15%*). Also generally aware that tips are expected in hotels, theatres, and other service situations. Yet may make errors as the result of misunderstanding or misapplying assumptions about the culture, such as not tipping a movie theatre usher or arriving too early for dinner.

Advanced

Limited social competence. Handles social situations successfully with a culture bearer accustomed to foreigners. Though home culture predomintes, speaker shows comprehension of general etiquette, such as avoiding taboos and never asking sensitive questions about age, salary, family affairs. Also shows com-

prehension of guest etiquette, such as complimenting hosts on food and wine, keeping both hands on the table when dining, holding the knife in the right hand, understanding that the kitchen is "off-limits" unless invited, not leaving immediately after dinner, and offering food or cigarettes to others before taking them oneself. Is aware of gifts as an expression of friendship, personal esteem, or gratitude. Knows how to accept gifts graciously. Knows how to apologize using such phrases as: *Je regrette, Excusez-moi, Pardon, Je suis désolé d'être en retard.* Can make introductions in formal and informal situations. Knows how to answer and call on the telephone: *Allô, Qui est à l'appareil? Ne quittez pas.* Knows how to ask for a third party: *Ici...Je voudrais parler avec...*, or leave a message: *Pouvez-vous lui dire que...lui a téléphoné?* Occasionally uses polite conditional to make requests (*Pourriez-vous m'indiquer...? Je voudrais un aller et retour*). Knows conversational phrases for accepting invitations (*avec plaisir*) or refusing (*Veuillez m'excuser mais...; Merci pour l'invitation, mais...*). Is able to do routine banking using vocabulary, such as *carnet de chèques, chèques de voyage, compte en banque, compte d'épargne, taux de change;* e.g., *Je voudrais déposer/toucher un chèque de...* Knows how to handle routine business at the post office (*Donnez-moi dix timbres, par avion s'il vous plaît. Je voudrais envoyer cette lettre 'recommandée.' Je voudrais acheter un mandat postal de 1.000 francs.*). Able to make more specific purchases in small or large stores and/or ask for specific help, such as *Je cherche une chemise de taille 38.* Still makes errors in the use of *vous* and *tu*. Is not competent to take part in a formal meeting or in a group where several persons are speaking informally at the same time.

Superior

Working social and professional competence. Can participate in almost all social situations and those within one vocation. Handles unfamiliar situations with ease and sensitivity, including some involving common taboos, or some that are otherwise emotionally charged. Comprehends most nonverbal responses. Laughs at some culture-related humor, such as imitation of substandard speech, plays on words, etc. In productive skills, neither culture dominates; nevertheless, makes appropriate use of cultural references and expressions, such as colloquial phrases (e.g., *Mon dieu! Sympa, zut! J'en ai marre, vachement*). Understands more colloquial and idiomatic expressions than is able to use (e.g., *avoir un mal au coeur, dormir debout, boire comme un trou, avoir une faim de loup, ras-le-bol*). Generally distinguishes between a formal and an informal register (correct use of *vous* and *tu*) and proper use of titles of respect. Discusses abstract ideas relating the foreign and native cultures and is aware cognitively of areas of difference, i.e., the importance of family ties, typical French characteristics (*art de vivre*), and some understanding of the role that French history and literature play in the everyday life and attitudes of the people. Realizes the influence of the church, religion, or lack thereof, and the anticleric attitude of many. Is aware of various social classes—*ouvrier, petit bourgeois, grand bourgeois*—and the difficulty in "changing" social classes. Can discuss current events as well as fields of personal interest and support opinions. Is generally limited, however, in handling abstractions. Would know that the French *esprit de contradiction* is a means of animating discussion and that French persons might criticize their own country, but would not accept criticism of France from foreigners. Minor inaccuracies occur in perception of meaning and in the expression of the intended representation, but do not result in serious misunderstanding, even by a culture bearer unaccustomed to foreigners.

Near-Native Competence

Fits behavior to audience, and French culture dominates almost entirely when using the language. Full social and professional competence. Has internalized the concept that culture is relative and is always on the lookout to do the appropriate thing; no longer assumes that own culture is "the way it is." Can counsel, persuade, negotiate, represent a point of view, describe and compare features of the native and target cultures. In such comparisons, can discuss geography, history, institutions, customs and behavior patterns, and current events and national policies. Perceives almost all unverbalized responses (gestures, emotional reactions) and recognizes almost all allusions, including historical (*"L'état, c'est moi."*) and literary commonplaces (*"Ce siècle avait deux ans."; "Rodrique, as-tu du coeur?"; "Il faut cultiver notre jardin."*). Laughs at most culture-related humor (*l'esprit gaulois*), such as imitation of regional or ethnic speech patterns (*l'accent méridional*) and allusions to political or comic strip figures (e.g., *Les Frustrés de Bretécher* or *Astérix*). Uses low frequency idiomatic expressions (*J'en ai ma claque; C'est pas demain la veille*); sayings (*Couper les cheveux en quatre*), or proverbs (*Vouloir, c'est pouvoir*). Controls formal and informal register. Has lived in the culture for a long time or has studied it extensively. Is inferior to the culture bearer only in background information related to the culture such as childhood experiences, detailed regional geography, and past events of significance.

Native Competence

Native competence. Examinee is indistinguishable from a person brought up and educated in the culture.

Provisional German Descriptions —Speaking

Novice—Low

Unable to function in spoken German. Oral production is limited to occasional isolated words such as *ja, nein, ich, Sie, Fritz* (name), *Fräulein*. Essentially no communicative ability.

Novice—Mid

Able to operate only in a very limited capacity within very predictable areas of need. Vocabulary is limited to that necessary to express simple elementary needs and basic courtesy formulae such as *Guten Tag/Morgen; Auf Wiederschen; Das ist...*(name), *was ist...; Wer ist das? Danke; Bitte; Grüss Gott*. Speakers at this level cannot create original sentences or cope with the simplest situations. Pronunciation is frequently unintelligible and is strongly influenced by the first language. Can be understood only with difficulty, even by persons such as teachers who are used to dealing with non-native speakers or in interactions where the context strongly supports the utterance.

Novice—High

Able to satisfy immediate needs using learned utterances. There is no consistent ability to create original sentences or cope with simple survival situations. Can ask questions or make statements with reasonable accuracy only where this involves short memorized utterances or formulae. Vocabulary is limited to common areas such as colors, days of the week, months of the year, names of basic objects, numbers, and names of immediate family members—*Vater, Mutter, Geschwister*. Grammar shows only a few parts of speech. Verbs are generally in the present tense. Errors are frequent and, in spite of repetition, may severely inhibit communication even with persons used to dealing with such learners. Unable to make one's needs known and communicate essential information in a simple survival situation.

Intermediate—Low

Able to satisfy basic survival needs and minimum courtesy requirements. In areas of immediate need or in very familiar topics, can ask and answer some simple questions and respond to and sometimes initiate simple statements. Can make one's needs known with great difficulty in a simple survival situation, such as ordering a meal, getting a hotel room, and asking for directions; vocabulary is adequate to talk simply about learning the target language and other academic studies. For example: *Wieviel kostet das? Wo ist der Bahnhof? Ich möchte zu... Wieviel Uhr ist es? Ich lerne hier Deutsch; Ich studiere schon 2 Jahre; Ich habe eine Wohnung*. Awareness of gender apparent (many mistakes). Word order is random. Verbs are generally in the present tense. Some correct use of predicate adjectives and personal pronouns (*ich, wir*). No clear distinction made between polite and familiar address forms (*Sie, du*). Awareness of case system sketchy. Frequent errors in all structures. Misunderstandings frequently arise from limited vocabulary and grammar and erroneous phonology, but, with repetition, can generally be understood by native speakers in regular contact with foreigners attempting to speak German. Little precision in information conveyed owing to tentative state of grammatical development and little or no use of modifiers.

Intermediate—Mid

Able to satisfy most routine travel and survival needs and some limited social demands. Can ask and answer questions on very familiar topics and in areas of immediate need. Can initiate and respond to simple statements, and can maintain simple face-to-face conversation. Can ask and answer questions and carry on a conversation on topics beyond basic survival needs or involving the exchange of personal information, i.e., can talk simply about autogiographical information, leisure time activities, academic subjects. Can handle simple transactions at the post office, bank, drugstore, etc. Misunderstandings arise because of limited vocabulary, frequent grammatical errors, and poor pronunciation and intonation, although speakers at this level have broader vocabulary and/or greater grammatical and phonological control than speakers at Intermediate-Low. Speech is often characterized by long pauses. Some grammatical accuracy in some basic structures, i.e., subject-verb agreement, word order in simple statements (excluding adverbs) and interrogative forms, present tense of irregular verbs and imperative of separable prefix verbs (*Kommen Sie mit!*). Fluency is still strained but may be quite natural while within familiar territory. Is generally understood by persons used to dealing with foreigners.

Intermediate—High

Able to satisfy most survival needs and limited social demands. Developing flexibility in language production although fluency is still uneven. Can initiate and sustain a general conversation on factual topics beyond basic survival needs. Can give autobiographical information and discuss leisure time activities. Most verbs are still in the present tense, more common past participles appear (*gegangen, gesehen, geschlafen*). Many mistakes in choice of auxiliary (**habe gegangen* with the present perfect). Past tense is attempted also with common imperfect forms (*sagte, hatte, war*). Several high-frequency separable prefix verbs appear in the indicative (*ich gehe mit*). There is inconsistent coding of proper dative and accusative cases following prepositions in singular and plural. Attempts to expand discourse which is only accurate in short sentences. Frequently gropes for words. Comprehensible to native speakers used to dealing with foreigners, but still has to repeat utterances frequently to be understood by the general public.

* Denotes an error characteristic of speakers at this level.

Advanced	Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited school and work requirements. Can handle with confidence but not with facility most social and general conversations. Can narrate, describe and explain in past, present, and future time. Can communicate facts—what, who, when, where, how much—and can explain a point of view, in an uncomplicated fashion, but cannot conjecture or coherently support an opinion. Can talk in a general way about topics of current public interest (e.g., current events, student rules and regulations), as well as personal interest (work, leisure time activities) and can give autobiographical information. Can make factual comparisons (e.g., life in a city vs. life in a rural area). Can handle work related requirements, needing help in handling any complications or difficulties. Can make a point forcefully and communicate needs and thoughts in a situation with a complication (e.g., calling a mechanic for help with a stalled car, losing traveler's checks). Has a speaking vocabulary sufficient to respond simply with some circumlocutions. Can be understood by native speakers not used to dealing with foreigners, in spite of some pronunciation difficulties. Good control of all verbs in present tense, past participles of most verbs, simple past tense of most irregular verbs, modal auxiliaries, most separable verbs and some reflexives. Double infinitives in main clauses may be attempted (mistakes are expected). Genders of high frequency words are mostly correct. Some inaccuracy in choice of prepositions as well as in distinctions between position and motion. Speaker is hesitant at times and gropes for words, uses paraphrases and fillers, uncomplicated dependent clauses (*dass, weil*) but mistakes are expected when sentences are joined in limited discourse.
Advanced Plus	Able to satisfy most school and work requirements and show some ability to communicate on concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Can narrate, describe, and explain in past, present, and future time. Can consistently communicate facts and explain points of view in an uncomplicated fashion. Shows some ability to support opinions, explain in detail, and hypothesize, although only sporadically. Can discuss topics of current and personal interest, and can handle most situations that arise in everyday life (see Advanced Level examples) but will have difficulty with unfamiliar situations (e.g., losing a contact lens in a sink drain and going to a neighbor to borrow a wrench). Normally controls general vocabulary with some groping still evident. Speaking performance is often uneven (e.g., strong in either grammar or vocabulary but not in both). Good control of most verbs in present and past tense and most imperative forms. Irregular control of infinitive clauses with *zu*, conditional sentences (with *würde* plus infinitive, *hätte, wäre, könnte,* and *da(r)-* and *wo(r)-* compounds). Better control of prepositions and adjective endings but mistakes will occur. Control of dependent clauses. Distinguishes between subordinating and coordinating conjunctions and how they affect word order (*dass, weil*). Good control of limited discourse, but many errors in all more complicated structures. Often shows remarkable fluency and ease of speech, but under tension or pressure language may break down.
Superior	Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics. Can discuss particular interests and special fields of competence with reasonable ease. Can support opinions, hypothesize, and conjecture. May not be able to tailor language to fit various audiences or discuss highly abstract topics in depth. Vocabulary is broad enough that speaker rarely has to grope for a word; good use of circumlocution. Pronunciation may still be obviously foreign. Control of grammar is good. Sporadic errors but no patterns of error in tenses, cases, attributive adjectives, pronouns, most verbs plus preposition, dependent clauses, subjunctive II (present and past). Control less consistent in low frequency structures such as passive plus modals, the *lassen* construction, verbs plus specific prepositions (*achten, auf, sich halten an, sich irren in*), directional adverbs (*hinauf, hinunter, herüber*), double infinitives in dependent clauses (*dass er das nicht hat machen sollen*). Varying degrees of competence in usage of idiomatic expression and slang. Errors never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker.

Provisional German Descriptions—Listening

Novice—Low	No practical understanding of spoken German. Understanding is limited to cognates, borrowed words, high frequency social conventions, and occasional isolated words, such as *Tag, Auto, Haus, heute, morgen, schön.* Essentially no ability to comprehend even short utterances.
Novice—Mid	Sufficient comprehension to understand some memorized words within predictable areas of need. Vocabulary for comprehension is limited to simple elementary needs, basic courtesy formulae, such as *Guten Tag, Wie geht's? Auf Wiedersehen, Bis morgen, Danke,* and very simple memorized material relating to everyday objects and situations. Utterances understood rarely exceed more than two or three words at a time, and ability to understand is characterized by long pauses for assimilation and by repeated requests on the listener's part for repetition, and/or a slower rate of speech. Confuses words that sound similar, such as *fährt/Fahrt,* and pronouns, *er/ihr.*

Novice—High	Sufficient comprehension to understand a number of memorized utterances in areas of immediate need. Comprehends slightly longer utterances in situations where the context aids understanding, such as at the table, in a restaurant/store, in a train/bus. Phrases recognized have for the most part been memorized: *Die Milch/Marmelade, bitte. Die Fahrkarten, bitte.* Comprehends vocabulary common to daily needs. Comprehends simple questions/statements about family members, age, address, weather, time, daily activities and interests: *Wie viele Brüder/Schwester haben Sie? Wie alt sind sie? Wie ist das Wetter heute?* Misunderstandings arise from failure to perceive critical sounds or endings. Understands even tailored speech with difficulty but gets some main ideas. Often requires repetition and/or slowed rate of speed for comprehension, even when listening to persons such as teachers who are used to speaking with non-natives.
Intermediate—Low	Sufficient comprehension to understand utterances about basic survival needs, minimum courtesy and travel requirements. In areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics, can understand non-memorized material, such as simple questions in German. Comprehension areas include basic needs: meals, lodging, transportation, time, simple instructions (e.g., route directions, such as: *Gehen Sie geradeaus! Sie müssen links abgehen.*) and routine commands (e.g., from customs officials, police, such as: *Darf ich Ihren Pass sehen? Machen Sie die Koffer auf, bitte!*). Understands main ideas. Misunderstandings frequently arise from lack of vocabulary or from faulty processing of syntactic information often caused by strong interference from the native language or by the imperfect or partial acquisition of the target grammar (e.g., *er/ihr, er/en*).
Intermediate—Mid	Sufficient comprehension to understand simple conversations about some survival needs and some limited social conventions. Vocabulary permits understanding on topics beyond basic survival needs (e.g., personal history and leisure time activities), such as *Wo sind Sie geboren? Was tun Sie während der Freizeit? Was machen Sie gerne am Wochenende?* Evidence of understanding basic constructions, e.g., subject-verb and noun-adjective agreement; some inflection is understood. Understanding of grammatical structure allows recognition of future and past references either by verb forms, such as the constructed future (*Ich werde in die Stadt gehen*), the present perfect (*Ich bin in die Stadt gegangen*), and the simple past (*Als ich in die Stadt ging,...*), or with adverbs of time, such as *morgen, heute, gestern.*
Intermediate—High	Sufficient comprehension to understand short conversations about most survival needs and limited social conventions. Increasingly able to understand topics beyond immediate survival needs, such as biographical information (*Geburtsort, Geburtsdatum, Mädchenname der Mutter/Frau, Heimatstadt, Kindheits-/Jugenderlebnisse, Urlaubsplane/-erlebnisse/-ziele*). Able to comprehend most sentences, including those which use *dass, wenn, weil* constructions and which feature vocabulary and familiar situations (home, office, school and daily activities; simple purchases; directions). Most of the time is able to comprehend the semantic differences between utterances, such as: *Er war einen Monat in Köln; Er ist seit einem Monat in Köln; Sie sind nur eine Woche hier.* Shows spontaneity in understanding, but speed and consistency of understanding uneven. Understands more common tense forms and some word order patterns. Can get the gist of conversations, but cannot sustain comprehension in longer utterances or in unfamiliar situations. Understanding of descriptions and detailed information is limited. Aware of basic cohesive features, e.g., pronouns, verb inflections, but may be misunderstand, especially if other material intervenes. Still has to ask for utterances to be repeated.
Advanced	Sufficient comprehension to understand conversations about routine social conventions and limited school or work requirements. Able to understand face-to-face speech in standard German spoken at a normal rate, with some repetition and rewording, by a native speaker not used to dealing with foreigners. Able to get the gist of some radio broadcasts. Understands everyday topics, common personal and family news, well-known current events, and routine matters involving school or work; descriptions and narration about current, past and future events; the essential points of a discussion or speech at an elementary level on topics in special fields of interest. For example: *Wer hat die hiesige Wahl gewonnen? Wie reagierten die Deutschen auf den Bau neuer Kernkraftwerke? Zu welchem Grad leidet der Mittelstand unter der Inflation? Wurde die Kaufkraft durch die Inflation eingeschränkt?*
Advanced Plus	Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social conventions, conversations on school or work requirements, and discussions on concrete topics related to particular interests and special fields of competence. Often shows remarkable ability and ease of understanding, but comprehension may break down under tension or pressure (including unfavorable listening conditions). May display weakness or deficiency due to inadequate vocabulary base or less than secure knowledge of grammar and syntax. May be deficient or uneven in completely comprehending conversations or discussions by educated native speakers due to a less-than-adequate knowledge of more complex syntactic structures (tense usage in simple and complex statements, passive voice and extended adjective constructions, relative clauses, word order, subject-object relationships). Still has some difficulty following radio broadcasts. Can sometimes detect emotional overtones. Increasing ability to understand "between the lines" (i.e., to make inferences).

Superior	Sufficient comprehension to understand the essentials of all speech in standard dialects, including technical discussions within a special field. Has sufficient understanding of face-to-face speech, delivered with normal clarity and speed in standard dialects, on general topics and areas of special interest; understands hypothesizing and supported opinions. Has broad enough vocabulary that rarely has to ask for paraphrasing or explanation. Can follow accurately the essentials of conversations between educated native speakers, reasonably clear telephone calls, radio broadcasts, standard news items, oral reports, some oral technical reports, and public addresses on non-technical subjects. May not understand native speakers if they speak very quickly or use some slang or unfamiliar dialect. Can often detect emotional overtones. Can understand "between the lines" (i.e., make inferences).

Provisional German Descriptions—Reading

Novice—Low	No functional ability in reading German.
Novice—Mid	Sufficient understanding of written German to interpret highly contextualized words or cognates within predictable areas. Vocabulary for comprehension limited to simple elementary needs, such as names, addresses, dates, signs indicating names of streets and avenues (*Strasse, Weg*); building names (*Hotel, Restaurant, Apotheke*); short informative signs (*Eingang, Ausgang, Rauchverbot, Taxi, Fernsprecher, Flughafen, Strassenbahn*). Material understood rarely exceeds a single phrase and comprehension requires successive rereading and checking.
Novice—High	Sufficient comprehension of written language to interpret set expressions in areas of immediate need. Can recognize all letters of German (including umlauted ones and ß). Where vocabulary has been mastered, can read for instructional and directional purposes standardized messages, phrases or expressions, such as some items on menus (*Tagessuppe, Getränke, Salat*), schedules, timetables, maps, signs indicating hours of operation, social codes (*Rauchen verboten*), and street signs (*Haltestelle*). Vocabulary and grammar limited to the most common nouns, adjectives, question words, and a few verb forms. Material is read for essential information. Detail is overlooked or misunderstood.
Intermediate—Low	Sufficient comprehension to understand in printed form the simplest connected material, either authentic or specially prepared, dealing with basic survival and social needs. Able to understand previously mastered material and recombinations of mastered elements kept to the same level. Understands main ideas in material when structure and syntax parallel the native language. Can read simple, handwritten telephone messages, personal notes, or simple letters, all of which may contain social amenities, such as simple forms of address, closure, queries about family and friends. Understands simple language with high frequency grammatical, semantic, and syntactical items such as NP + VP of most frequent regular verbs (such as *arbeiten, bleiben, glauben, tun*), irregular verbs (such as *haben, sein, wissen, werden*), and modals (*müssen, wollen, können, sollen, mögen, dürfen*) in the present tense. Familiar with idioms relating to weather, age, personal well-being, and time (such as: *Wie ist das Wetter? Er ist sechs Jahre alt; Wie geht's? Wie spät ist es?*). Adverbs of time will be used more frequently to determine the tense or time of what is being read than the actual verb tenses. Past meaning of specific verbs might be missed quite frequently. Misunderstandings may arise when syntax diverges from that of the native language (such as the verb in second position) or when grammatical cues are overlooked (such as article and adjective declensions).
Intermediate—Mid	Sufficient comprehension to understand in printed form simple discourse for informative or social purposes. In response to perceived needs, can read public announcements to determine who, what, when, where, why, and how much regarding such subjects as sporting events, concerts, parades, and celebrations. Can also identify products, prices, and some conditions of sale in popular, illustrated advertising for everyday items, such as food, clothing, work or school supplies, and travel. Can comprehend a note or letter in which a writer used to dealing with non-native readers describes self and family, ages, occupations, residence, personality traits, and common preferences when high frequency vocabulary or cognates and simple structures are used. Understands the general content of headlines in newspapers, such as *Die Welt,* or article titles in popular magazines such as *Der Spiegel,* and in *Illustrierten,* if the content is familiar or of high interest. Understands facts and follows events of simple narration in either authentic or especially prepared texts when syntax is related to simple NP + VP + NP constructions. Recognizes negation (*nein, nicht, kein*) and interrogative forms. Generally consistent in interpreting the present, the future as expressed by adverbs of time with the present tense, but recognizes only the most common strong and weak verbs in the present perfect and simple past tenses. Understands adjective declensions and the use of other determiners such as definite and indefinite articles, demonstratives, and possessives, and interrogatives. Has some difficulty matching pronouns to referents and with the use of relative pronouns. Uses guessing strategies

to interpret vocabulary consisting of regular cognate patterns, and highly contextualized items. May have to read several times before understanding.

Intermediate—High

Sufficient comprehension to understand a simple paragraph for personal communication, information, or recreational purposes. Can read with understanding invitations, social notes, personal letters, and some simple business letters on familiar topics. Can identify main ideas from topic and summary paragraphs of simple articles in popular magazines (such as fashions, gardening, furniture, homes), news publications (national, regional, and local), or other informational sources (travel and tourist brochures, guides). Appreciates descriptive material on daily life and routines, and biographical information. Can read for pleasure some uncomplicated, yet authentic prose and a limited amount of poetry (Kästner, for example). Guesses at meaning from the context of a fictional narrative description or from cultural information. Begins to rely on a dictionary or glossary to check meaning and expand vocabulary. Is able to recognize present and past tenses in a widening variety of strong and weak verbs. Recognizes, but does not fully comprehend, connected discourse with coordinating conjuntions (*aber, oder, denn, und*) and relative pronouns and other relative connectors which result in dependent word order. Also recognizes reflexive verbal constructions. Interprets expressions of quantity quite accurately. Is beginning to understand the use of particles (such as *noch, doch, gar, ja, also*) in strengthening meaning. Begins to connect sentences in the discourse and to attach advance meaning to them, but cannot sustain understanding of longer discourse on unfamiliar topics. Misinterpretation occurs with more complex patterns (such as dependent word order and most idiomatic expressions).

Advanced

Sufficient comprehension to read simple authentic printed material or edited textual material within a familiar context. Can read uncomplicated, authentic prose on familiar subjects (sports, travel, movies, theater, food, music, current events), news items in newspapers and popular magazines, biographical information in personal letters on family topics. Reads within the limits of identifiable vocabulary some unedited texts, such as prose fiction, from carefully chosen authors, usually contemporary. Such selections might appear in Sunday newspaper supplements, other daily papers, or special anthologies on modern culture. The constructed future and the subjunctive are appreciated as different from the present, simple past, and present perfect. Conditions contrary to fact are recognized with more than average difficulty. The ability to guess at compounded vocabulary, nouns in specific, within context is becoming more accurate, but still some confusion over grammar and vocabulary not yet assimilated. As far as total comprehension is concerned, is able to read facts, but cannot extend them or put them together to draw inferences.

Advanced Plus

Sufficient comprehension to understand most factual information in non-technical prose as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to special interests. Able to read for information and description, to follow sequence of events, and to react to information read. Can separate main ideas from lesser ones and use that division to advance understanding. In major newspapers and magazines, can read international items and social and cultural news. Understanding of specialized items depends upon individual interests and background, at this level can read material in own areas of interest. Within literary fields of interest, can read non-esoteric prose, including critical articles and books. Can read signs, posters, advertisements, and public announcements. Can follow simple printed directions for cooking and other projects within areas of expertise. Guesses logically at new words by using linguistic and non-linguistic contexts and prior knowledge. Is able to comprehend most high-frequency idiomatic expressions, but will still have difficulty with figurative meanings. Even though the subjunctive and conditional are better recognized and understood, the reader still has difficulty in detecting subjective attitudes, values, and judgements in what is read.

Superior

Able to read standard newspaper items addressed to the general reader, routine correspondence reports, and technical material in a field of interest at a normal rate of speed (at least 220 WPM). Can gain new knowledge from material in a variety of publications on a wide range of unfamiliar topics related to fields of interest. Can interpret hypotheses, supported opinions, and documented facts, as well as figurative devices, stylistic differences, and humor. Can read most literary genres in the original: novels, essays, poetry, short stories, and most literature written for the general public. Reading ability is not subject dependent. Broad general vocabulary, knowledge of most structures, and development of strategies for logical guessing allow for successful interpretation of unfamiliar words, idioms, or structures. Verb tenses and moods have been largely mastered. Interpretation of the subjunctive and conditional forms and passive constructions in indirect discourse of formal writing is generally complete, and with few errors. Able to achieve overall comprehension of material, even though there may be some gaps in detail. Is generally able to comprehend facts, although misinterpretation may still occur. Can draw inferences, but may be unable to appreciate nuances or stylistics.

Provisional German Descriptions—Writing

Novice—Low

No functional ability in writing German.

Novice—Mid

No practical communicative writing skills. Able to copy isolated words and short phrases. Able to transcribe previously studied words or phrases. Able to write name, address, dates and other numbers, as well as common expressions such as those used in greetings and leave-takings.

Novice—High

Able to write simple fixed expressions and limited memorized material. Can supply information when requested on forms such as hotel reservations and travel documents. Can write names, write out numbers from 1-20, dates (days of the week, months of the year), own nationality as well as other common adjectives of nationality, addresses, and other simple biographic information. Can write limited learned vocabulary for common objects, short phrases, and simple lists. Can write such expressions as *Guten Tag! Ich heisse ..., Wie geht es Dir? Wie geht es Ihnen?* and other fixed social formulae. Can name some common objects; knows some common adjectives and adverbs; can use the present tense of some common regular verbs, such as forms of the present tense of *haben* and *sein;* can write simple negative sentences using *nicht* (but often in wrong place) and interrogative sentences with words such as *wo, wie, warum, wann,* etc. Writes in sentences or short phrases using very basic subject-verb-object word order. Can ask and answer very simple yes-no or information questions using limited memorized or very familiar sentence patterns, with frequent misspellings and inaccuracies. Usually forgets umlauts. Sometimes uses infinitives for conjugated verbs. Has a concept of gender, and can produce definite and indefinite articles, though often inappropriately. Often forgets to make adjectives agree with nouns. Generally cannot create own sentences in the language, but uses memorized material or transformations of familiar patterns.

Intermediate—Low

Has sufficient control of the writing system to meet limited practical needs. Can write short messages, such as simple questions or notes, postcards, phone messages and the like. Can take simple notes on material dealing with very familiar topics within the scope of limited language experience. Can create statements or questions, in the present tense using negative and interrogative constructions, within the scope of limited language experience. Material produced consists of recombinations of learned vocabulary and structures into simple sentences. Can express present and future by using the present tense and adverbs of time such as *morgen, heute, nächste Woche, nächstes Jahr.* For example: *Ich schreibe heute eine Prüfung. Wir fahren nächste Woche nach Berlin.* Generally cannot express past time by past tenses, but may incorrectly use the present tense and an adverb of time such as *gestern, gestern abend, heute morgen* to convey past meaning. Awareness of gender apparent (many mistakes). Awareness of case system sketchy. Some correct use of predicate adjectives and personal pronouns (*ich, wir*). Vocabulary is limited to common objects and cognates, and is inadequate to express anything but elementary needs. Can express numbers from 1-100 with some misspellings. Often inserts native-language vocabulary for unknown words, and is generally not capable of circumlocution to get meaning across. Writing tends to be a loose collection of sentences or sentence fragments on very familiar topics (likes and dislikes, general routine, everyday events or situations). Makes continual errors in spelling (*ei* vs. *ie,* often omits umlauts), grammar (incorrect adjective endings, incorrect subject-verb agreement), and punctuation. Word order is random, but writing can be read and understood by a native reader used to dealing with foreigners. Able to produce appropriately some fundamental sociolinguistic distinctions in formal and familiar style, (*Herr, Frau, Fräulien*), but no clear distinction between polite and familiar address forms (*Sie, du*), such as appropriate subject pronouns, titles of address and basic social formulae.

Intermediate—Mid

Sufficient control of writing system to meet some survival needs and some limited social demands. Able to compose short paragraphs or take simple notes on very familiar topics grounded in personal experiences. Can discuss likes and dislikes, daily routines, give dates and times, discuss everyday events, describe immediate surroundings (home, work, school), narrate simple events, and the like. Can use correctly the present tense of most regular verbs and some common irregular verbs, such as *haben, sein, tun, wollen, können, wissen, verstehen,* and *möchten* with occasional production errors. Can use *werden* plus infinitive to express future time. Has sporadic control of high frequency verbs in the compound past but may not attend to correct auxiliary verb or past participle agreement. Can use definite, indefinite, and partitive articles, but often uses them inappropriately, usually gets cases wrong. Frequent errors in gender-adjective agreement and cases may occur. Shows some ability to use some determiners other than articles, such as possessive adjectives or interrogative adjectives, but may make errors in appropriate choice of form. Tends not to use object pronouns, relative constructions, or their cohesive elements of discourse, rendering the written style somewhat stilted and simplistic. Generally good control of basic constructions and inflections, such as subject-verb agreement, noun-adjective agreement, and straightforward syntactic constructions in present and future time. Grammatical accuracy in some structures solidifies, e.g., word order in

simple statements (excluding adverbs) and interrogative forms, and imperative of separable prefix verbs (*Kommen Sie mit!*). May make frequent errors when venturing beyond current level of linguistic competence (such as when expressing opinions or emotions, where non-memorized conditionals, subjunctives, and other advanced concepts of grammar may come into play). When resorting to a dictionary, often is unable to identify appropriate vocabulary, or uses dictionary entry in uninflected form.

Intermediate—High

Sufficient control of writing system to meet most survival needs and limited social demands. Can take notes in some detail on familiar topics (autobiographical information, preferences, daily routine, simple descriptions and narration of everyday events and situations) and respond to personal questions on such topics using elementary vocabulary and common structures. Can write simple letters, brief synopses and paraphrases, summaries of biographical data and work experience, and short compositions on familiar topics. Can create sentences and short paragraphs relating to most survival needs (food, lodging, transportation, immediate surroundings and situations) and limited social demands. Can express fairly accurately present and future time, using the future and the present tense of most common regular and irregular verbs, including reflexive verbs. Can use the compound past with both *haben* and *sein* auxiliaries, but does not always use it correctly or appropriately. Past tense is also attempted with common simple past forms (*sagte, hatte, war*). Several high frequency separable prefix verbs appear in the indicative (*ich gehe mit*). There is inconsistent coding of proper dative and accusative cases following prepositions in singular and plural. Shows good control of elementary vocabulary and some control of basic syntactic patterns (some object pronouns, and determiners, usually use of negative in past tenses and future with correct placement, etc.). Still has problems in inverted word order and in proper placement of time, place, and manner phrases. Major errors still occur when expressing more complex thoughts. Dictionary usage may still yield incorrect vocabulary or forms, although can use a dictionary to advantage to express simple ideas. Generally does not use basic cohesive elements of discourse to advantage (relative constructions, object pronouns, connectors) and the like. Writing, though faulty, is comprehensible to native speakers used to reading German written by non-natives. Is able to express a few thoughts for which vocabulary is unknown via circumlocution, but may insert native-language equivalents for unknown words or use native-language syntactic patterns when expressing ideas beyond current level of linguistic competence.

Advanced

Able to write routine social correspondence and simple discourse of at least several paragraphs on familiar topics. Can write simple social correspondence, take notes, and write cohesive summaries, resumés, and short narratives and descriptions on factual topics. Able to write about everyday topics by using adjectives, with mostly correct gender and case. Genders of high frequency words are mostly correct. Able to narrate events using present, compound past, some simple past, and future forms, although the contrast between uses of the two past tenses may not be consistently accurate. Occasional use of some subjunctive forms to express politeness and preference. Has sufficient writing vocabulary to express oneself simply with some circumlocutions. Can write about a very limited number of current events or daily situations and express personal preferences and observations in some detail using basic structures. Is able to recycle new but meaningful phrases whether lexical or structural, i.e., lifts phrases appropriately, writing appears more sophisticated. When writing own thoughts is more likely to paraphrase according to native language at times. Controls many separable and reflexive verbs and double infinitive construction in main clauses. Good control of morphology in verb tenses; correct endings for regular and irregular verbs in tenses mentioned above. Often uses correct endings for adjectives. Controls frequently used structures such as interrogatives, negatives (but still not always correctly placed), prepositions with some rest/motion distinction but not always proper cases for the distinction, and choice of determiners (*der* vs. *ein*). Preposition use after verbs or adjectives is often inaccurate. Writing is understandable by a native speaker not used to reading German written by non-natives. Writer uses a limited number of cohesive devices such as a single object pronoun (direct or indirect). Some use of relative pronouns to combine sentences and some common conjunctions are used (*denn, weil, wann, wo,* etc.). Mistakes in subordinate clause auxiliary verb placement and double infinitive order. Able to join sentences in limited discourse, but has difficulty and makes frequent errors producing complex sentences. Paragraphs are reasonably unified and coherent.

Advanced Plus

Shows ability to write about most common topics with precision and in some detail. Can write fairly detailed resumés and summaries and take accurate notes. Can handle most informal and business correspondence. Can describe and narrate personal experiences and explain simply point of view in prose discourse by using introductory phrases (e.g., *meiner Meinung nach, ich glaube, dass..., ich bin sicher, dass...*). Can write about concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Normally controls general vocabulary with circumlocution or modification where necessary, e.g., may use negation plus lexical item for an unknown antonym, or modify words with *sehr, viel,* etc., if a more specific term is unknown, or resort to a category label for unknown components. Often shows remarkable fluency or ease of expression, but under time constraints (e.g., no opportunity to rewrite), and pressure (e.g., testing), language

may be inaccurate and/or incomprehensible, especially if important lexical items are missing or if inaccurate tense usage interferes with meaning. Generally strong in either grammar or vocabulary, but not in both. Weaknesses and unevenness in one of the foregoing or in spelling result in occasional miscommunication. Areas of weakness may involve detail in the use of simple constructions: irregular plurals of nouns, adjectives; determiners (usage rather than form); prepositions (after verbs or adjectives); negatives (still has problems with subtleties of placement and form, *nicht ein* vs. *kein*). Weaknesses are also observed in more complex structures: tense usage; compound past vs. simple past after *als;* avoidance where possible of *würde* in *wenn* clauses; passive constructions (rarely uses *man* or reflexive but tends to parallel English with consequent use of *sein*); statal and real passive confused; word order still a problem, sometimes with inversion, reflexive and auxiliary placement in dependent word order. Good control of simple dependent word order, subordinating and coordinating conjunctions (*denn* vs. *weil*), and relative pronouns. Irregular control of infinitive clauses with *zu*. Uses wide range of tenses as time indicators including hypothetical subjunctive (with *würde* plus infinitive, *hätte, wäre, könnte*). Uses *da(r)-* and *wo(r)-* compounds. Better control of prepositions, adjectives and case endings, but mistakes still occur. Some misuse of vocabulary still evident, especially when using dictionary for words with multiple meanings or where related words carry various functions, but does use a dictionary to advantage where a fairly direct bilingual translation and no intralingual ambiguity exists. Shows ability to use circumlocution. Writing is understandable to native speakers not used to reading material written by non-natives, though the style is still obviously foreign.

Superior

Able to use written German effectively in most formal and informal exchanges on practical, social, and professional topics. Can write most types of correspondence, such as memos, social and business letters (with appropriate formulaic introductions and closings), short research papers, and statements of position. Can express hypotheses and conjectures, and present arguments or points of view accurately and effectively. Can write about areas of special interest and handle topics in special fields. Has good control of a full range of structures so that time, description, and narration can be used to expand upon ideas. Errors in basic structures are sporadic and not indicative of communicative control. In addition to simple tenses, can use compound tenses to show time relationships among events and to express coordinate and subordinate ideas clearly and coherently. Has lexical control of subordinate conjunctions. Controls dependent word order with auxiliary and reflexive placement such as: *ich weiss, dass er hatte gestern kommen sollen* and *er sagte, dass sich der mann umzog*. Able to use quotative subjunctive (subjunctive I) consistently, as well as passives plus modals. Can use hypothetical subjunctive (subjunctive II) correctly, as well as directional adverbs (*hinauf, hinunter, herüber,* etc.) and the *lassen* construction. Has a wide enough vocabulary to convey the message accurately, though style may be foreign. Uses dictionary to a high degree of accuracy to supplement specialized vocabulary or to improve content or style. Although sensitive to differences in formal and informal style, still may not tailor writing precisely or accurately to a variety of audiences (except for personal vs. business correspondence) or styles.

Provisional German Descriptions—Culture

Novice

Limited interaction. Behaves with considerateness. Is resourceful in nonverbal communication, but does not interpret reliably gestures or culturally-specific nonverbal behavior, such as physical contacts with greetings. Is limited in language (see listening/speaking guidelines) but may be able to use short phrases of courtesy (*Danke, Danke schön, Bitte, Bitte schön, Entschuldigung, Verzeihung*) and basic titles of respect (*Herr, Frau, Fräulein*). Lacks generally the knowledge of culture patterns requisite for survival situations.

Intermediate

Survival competence. Can deal with familiar survival situations and interact with a culture bearer accustomed to foreigners. Is able to use conventional phrases when being introduced, such as *Es freut mich* or *Sehr erfreut,* as well as proper greetings at different times of day, such as *Guten Tag, Guten Abend, Grüss Gott* (in Bavaria) and leave-taking, *Auf Wiedersehen, Bis bald.* Shows comprehension of distinction between *Sie* and *du* form of address. Can provide background material in the standard form of the culture, such as a personal address (street name followed by number—*Leopoldstrasse 30*—zip code preceding name of city, zone within large city following name of city—*8000 München 23*) telephone number in many areas in groups of two: *23 23 67.* Is able to express wants in routine situations with simple phrases, such as *Ein Zimmer ohne Bad, bitte; Ein Bier, bitte; Wievel kostete eine Postkarte nach U.S.A. per Luftpost?* and to ask directions such as *Wo ist hier die Schellingstrasse?* Understands the need to go to specialty shops such as *die Metzergerei, die Bäckerei, die Konditorei* to buy certain foods but is also aware of the offerings in supermarkets and department stores. Is aware of the use of the metric system and can function in it, using such phrases as *Ein Kilo Orangen* and *200 Gramm Leberwurst.* Is aware of different meal schedules as well as the usual content of each: breakfast, light, without either warm cooked meats or eggs other

than boiled; noon meal, the main meal of the day, heavy, but usually without a rich dessert; often, late in the afternoon, coffee and a pastry; evening meal, light, usually consisting of cold meats, salads and cheese. Knows how to use public transportation systems, whether to buy ticket from an automat, a ticket agent or a conductor. Is generally aware that small tips are expected in addition to the tip and service charge that have been added to the bill in restaurants and cafes. Is generally aware that tips are expected in other service areas such as hotels and bars. May make errors as the result of misunderstanding or misapplying assumptions about the culture, such as not tipping a gas station attendant or arriving too early for a dinner invitation.

Advanced

Limited social competence. Handles routine situations successfully with a culture bearer accustomed to foreigners. Though home culture predominates, shows comprehension of common rules of etiquette, of titles of respect, of importance of dressing according to the occasion in more formal society. Is aware of taboos and sensitive areas of the culture and avoids them. Shows comprehension of guest etiquette, such as bringing the hostess a small gift (chocolates or flowers), keeping both hands on the table while dining, holding the knife in the right hand, understanding that the kitchen is off-limits unless invited, offering food and cigarettes to others before taking them oneself. Knows how to use the phrases commonly used at table, such as *Guten Appetit;* and while drinking, such as *Zum Wohl* and *Prost.* Is aware of gifts as expression of friendship, personal esteem or gratitude. Knows appropriate gift for various occasions, knows the basic guidelines for presenting flowers. Knows how to accept gifts graciously. Knows conventional phrases for accepting invitations, such as *Sehr gern,* as well as for refusing them, such as *Vielen Dank für die Einlading, aber ich kann leider nicht kommen.* Knows how to apologize with such phrases as *Pardon; Entschuldigen Sie; bitte, vielmals,* or *Das tut mir furchtbar leid.* Can make introductions and can introduce self in both informal and formal situations. Knows how to use the telephone. Answers by giving the last name, calls by saying *Hier ist...* Knows how to ask for a third party: *Ich möchte, bitte,...sprechen.* Knows how to leave a message: *Könnten Sie, bitte,...ausrichten, dass...* Is able to shop in both large and small stores and to ask for specific items, using such expressions as *Ich hätte gern ein Sporthemd, Grösse 38; Der Schnitt gefällt mir schon, aber die Farbe nicht; Haben Sie vielleicht etwas in einer niedrigeren Preislage.* Is able to do routine banking, using such phrases as *Ich möchte, bitte, Dollarreiseschecks in DM wechseln; Wie steht der Dollar heute? Ich möchte, bitte, einzahlen; Ich möchte, bitte, abheben; Ich möchte, bitte, ein Scheck einlösen.* Knows how to handle routine business at the post office, including telephone and monetary service provided there, using such phrases as *Geben Sie mir zehn Neunziger, bitte; Einschrieben, bitte; Ich möchte ein Personengespräch mit Herrn Bianco in Italien führen; Ich möchte bitte Geld überweisen.* Is not competent to take part in a formal meeting or in a group where several persons are speaking informally at the same time.

Superior

Working social and professional competence. Can participate in almost all social situations and those within one vocation. Handles unfamiliar situations with ease and sensitivity, including some involving common taboos, or some that are otherwise emotionally charged. Comprehends most non-verbal responses. Laughs at some culture related humor, such as imitation of substandard speech, imitation of foreign accents, and references to stereotypes within the culture. In productive skills, neither culture dominates, nevertheless makes appropriate use of cultural references and expressions, such as colloquial phrases (*gottseidank, Mein Gott*) and idiomatic phrases (*Er hat sie nicht alle; Ich drücke dir die Daumen*). Understands more colloquial and idiomatic phrases than can use, such as *Gute Miene zum bösen Spiel machen* and *Der langen Rede kurzer Sinn.* Generally able to distinguish between formal and informal registers of speech, such as *Ich war wie aus den Wolken gefallen* vs. *Mir blieb die spucke weg.* Uses titles of respect correctly. Discusses abstract ideas relating to foreign and native culture and is aware of areas of difference. Has some awareness and understanding of typical German characteristics and expressions such as *Gemütlichkeit, Wanderlust, Sehnsucht, ein schönes Gesprach* vs. small talk. Has some understanding of the role that German history, literature, folklore and music play in the everyday life and attitudes of the people. Is aware of differing attitudes toward religion and the church in various parts of German-speaking areas. Is aware of various social classes and of the feelings of members of a given social class toward members of other social classes. Can discuss current events as well as fields of personal interest and can support opinions, but is generally limited in handling abstractions. Is aware that people do not generally accept criticism of their country from foreigners although they may be quite free to criticize aspects of their own country themselves. Minor inaccuracies occur in perception of meaning and in the expression of the intended representation but do not result in serious misunderstandings, even by a culture bearer unaccustomed to foreigners.

Near-Native Competence

Full social and professional competence. Has internalized the concept that culture is relative and is always on the lookout to do the appropriate thing; no longer assumes that own culture is "the way it is." Fits behavior to audience. Can council, persuade, negotiate, represent a point of view, describe and compare

features of the native and target cultures. In such comparisons, can discuss geography, history, institutions, customs and behavior patterns, current events and national policies. Perceives almost all unverbalized responses (gestures, emotional reaction) and recognizes almost all allusions, including historical (*Der alte Fritz* or *Der Lotse geht von Bord*) and literary commonplaces (*die Gretchenfrage; Es irrt der Mensch, solang er strebt*). Laughs at most culture-related humor, such as imitations of regional dialects and allusions to popular figures in public life and in the media. Uses low frequency idiomatic expressions (*Das geht auf keine Kuhhaut*), sayings (*Er säuft wie ein Besenbinder*) and proverbs (*Was Hänschen nicht lernt, lernt Hans nimmernmehr*). Controls formal and informal register of the language. Knows when and how to offer the *du* form of address and understands the implications of doing so. Has lived in the culture for a long time and has studied it extensively. Is inferior to the culture bearer only in background information related to the culture such as childhood experiences, detailed regional geography and past events of significance.

Native Competence — Native competence. Examinee is indistinguishable from a person raised and educated in the culture.

Provisional Spanish Descriptions—Speaking

Novice—Low Unable to function in spoken Spanish. Oral production limited to occasional isolated words or expressions which have been borrowed into English or which are cognates of English words. Some examples are: *sombrero, taco, ¡olé!* Essentially no communicative ability.

Novice—Mid Able to operate only in a very limited capacity within very predictable areas of need. Vocabulary is limited to that necessary to express simple elementary needs and basic courtesy formulae, such as *Buenos días; ¿Qué tal? Muy bien, gracias; ¿Cuánto es?* Syntax is fragmented, verbs are usually used in the infinitive form, and there is little or no subject-verb or noun-adjective agreement. The majority of utterances consist of isolated words or short formulae. Utterances are marked and often flawed by repetition of an interlocutor's words (*Q: ¿Qué comes por la mañana? *A: Comes por la mañana cereal.*) and frequent long pauses; speakers at this level cannot create original sentences or cope with the simplest situation. Pronunciation is frequently unintelligible and is strongly influenced by the first language. Can be understood only with difficulty, even by persons such as teachers who are used to dealing with non-native speakers, or in interactions where the context strongly supports the utterance.

• Denotes an error characteristic of speakers at this level.

Novice—High Able to satisfy immediate needs using learned utterances. There is no consistent ability to create original sentences or cope with simple survival situations, although there are some emerging signs of spontaneity and flexibility. Can ask questions or make statements with reasonable accuracy only where this involves short memorized utterances or formulae. There is some increase in utterance length, but frequent long pauses and repetition of the interlocutor's words still occur. Most utterances are telegraphic, and errors often occur when word endings and verbs are omitted or confused (e.g., *Sí. *Casa pequeño. *Cuatros cuartos*). Speech is characterized by enumeration, rather than by sentences. Vocabulary is limited to common areas, such as colors, days of the week, months of the year, names of basic objects, numbers up to 100, and names of immediate family members. There is some concept of the present tense forms of regular verbs, particular *-ar* verbs, and some common irregular verbs (*ser, querer, tener*) although use is limited primarily to first person singular. There is some use of articles, indicating a concept of gender, although mistakes are constant and numerous. Use of *qué* and *cómo,* and questions are often syntactically incorrect and semantically inaccurate. May be able to pronounce sounds correctly in isolation (*rr, r, ll, ción*) but cannot do so in words or groups of words. Errors are frequent and, in spite of repetition, may severely inhibit communication even with persons used to dealing with such learners. Unable to make one's needs known and communicate essential information in a simple survival situation.

• Denotes an error characteristic of speakers at this level.

Intermediate—Low Able to satisfy basic survival needs and minimum courtesy requirements. In areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics, can ask and answer simple questions, can respond to and sometimes initiate simple statements, and can maintain simple face-to-face conversation. Can ask and answer questions such as *¿Cuántos años tienes? ¿Cómo se llama usted? ¿Cuántas personas hay en tu familia?* and *¿Qué estudia usted?.* Can sustain a short conversation on such familiar topics as characteristics of self and family members (name, age, physical description), location and description of home, school, or work place, and other topics that involve an exchange of simple factual information. Can make one's needs known with great difficulty in a simple survival situation, such as ordering a meal, getting a hotel room, and asking for directions. Vocabulary is inadequate to express anything beyond basic information on familiar subjects and elementary needs. Little precision in information can be conveyed and misunderstandings frequently arise because of limited vocabulary, numerous grammatical errors, and poor pronunciation and intonation. There is some control of the present tense of regular and some common irregular verbs and of gender, number and subject-verb agreement. Misunderstandings frequently arise from limited vocabulary and grammar and erroneous phonology, but, with repetition, can generally be understood by native speakers in regular contact with foreigners attempting to speak Spanish. Little precision in information conveyed owing to tentative state of grammatical development and little or no use of modifiers.

Intermediate—Mid Able to satisfy most routine travel and survival needs and some limited social demands. Can ask and answer questions on very familiar topics and in areas of immediate need. Can initiate and respond to simple statements, and can maintain simple face-to-face conversation. Can ask and answer questions and carry on a conversation on topics beyond basic survival needs or involving the exchange of basic personal information, i.e., can talk simply about autobiographical details, leisure time activities, daily schedule, and some future plans. In a simple situation, such as ordering a meal, making purchases, and requesting a hotel room, can deal with details, such as requesting a table for two in a quiet corner, asking for an article

of clothing of a particular color, getting a hotel room with a private bath for a given length of time, or inquiring about modes of payment. Can handle simple transactions at the post office, bank, drugstore, etc. Misunderstandings arise because of limited vocabulary, frequent grammatical errors, and poor pronunciation and intonation, although speakers at this level have broader vocabulary and/or greater grammatical and phonological control than speakers at Intermediate—Low. Speech is often characterized by long pauses. Some grammatical accuracy in basic constructions, e.g., subject- verb agreement, noun-adjective and gender agreement for familiar vocabulary, present tense of regular and some irregular verbs such as *tener, poner, ser, estar, ir.* Can express future time by using *ir a* plus infinitive. May have a concept of past time, but can use only isolated past tense forms which have been learned as vocabulary items. Syntax in most simple declarative sentences is generally correct including placement of most common adjectives. Is generally undersood by persons used to dealing with foreigners.

Intermediate—High

Able to satisfy most survival needs and limited social demands. Developing flexibility in language production although fluency is still uneven. Can initiate and sustain a general conversation on factual topics beyond basic survival needs. Can give autobiographical information and discuss leisure time activities. To a lesser degree, can talk about some past activities and future plans and non-personal topics, such as activities of organizations and descriptions of events, although ability to describe and give precise information in these areas is limited. Can provide sporadically, although not consistently, simple description and narration of present, past, and future events, although limited vocabulary range and insufficient control of grammar lead to much hesitation and inaccuracy. Extended discourse is largely a series of short, discrete utterances; cannot sustain coherent structures in longer utterances by the use of conjunctions or relative clauses. Has basic knowledge of the differences between *ser* and *estar* (physical description, nationality, profession vs. location, temporary health condition), although errors are frequent. Can control the present tense of most regular and the common irregular verbs, and has some control of basic reflexive verbs. May be able to use some direct and indirect object pronouns and occasionally use some knowledge of the preterite of some regular and common irregular verbs (*fui/fue, vi/vio*), but uses them only sporadically. Comprehensible to native speakers used to dealing with foreigners, but still has to repeat utterances frequently to be understood by the general public.

Advanced

Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements. Can handle with confidence but not with facility most social and general conversations. Can narrate, describe, and explain in past, present, and future time. Can communicate facts—what, who, when, where, how much—and can explain points of view, in an uncomplicated fashion but cannot conjecture or coherently support an opinion. Can talk in a general way about topics of current public interest (e.g., current events, student rules and regulations), as well as personal interest (work, leisure time activities) and can give autobiographical information. Can make factual comparisons (life in a city vs. life in a rural area, for example). Can handle limited work requirements, needing help in handling any complications or difficulties. Can make a point forcefully and communicate needs and thoughts in a situation with a complication (e.g., finding a bug in the soup in a restaurant, losing traveler's checks). Has a speaking vocabulary sufficient to respond simply with some circumlocutions. Can be understood by native speakers not used to dealing with foreigners, in spite of some pronunciation difficulties. Can usually handle elementary constructions quite accurately such as the present tense of regular and irregular verbs, and preterite and imperfect forms. Can use imperative forms and can occasionally use the subjunctive in indirect commands. Controls comparative and superlative adjectives, relative, interrogative, and simple and double object pronouns, and negatives (*nadie, nada, nunca,* etc.). Syntax, including position of adjectives, is usually correct. Grasps but does not control the basic differences in usage between the preterite and the imperfect (repeated or continuous vs. single action in the past, description vs. narration in the past) so that many mistakes are to be expected. Can link sentences together in limited discourse by using conjunctions and subordinate clauses.

Advanced Plus

Able to satisfy most work requirements and show some ability to communicate on concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Can narrate, describe, and explain in past, present, and future time. Can communicate facts and explain points of view in an uncomplicated fashion consistently. Shows some ability to support opinions, explain in detail, and hypothesize, although only sporadically. Can discuss topics of current interest and personal interest, and can handle routine work requirements and some complications. Can handle situations involving complications that arise in everyday life (see Advanced Level examples) but will have difficulty with unfamiliar situations (e.g., losing a contact lens in a sink drain and going to a neighbor to borrow a wrench). Normally controls general vocabulary with some groping still evident. Speaking performance is often uneven (e.g., strong in either grammar or vocabulary, but not in both). Areas of weakness in grammar can range from simple constructions such as noun-adjective, gender, and subject-verb agreement to more complex structures such as tense usage (imperfect vs. preterite) *ser* and *estar,* and relative clauses. Only sporadic ability to use the present subjunc-

tive. Can regularly use the simple future, or *ir a* plus infinitive to express the future, as well as the present progressive and past progressive tenses. Controls possessive and demonstrative adjectives, and idiomatic expressions such as *acabar de* plus infinitive, *hace* plus preterite (ago), and *hacía* plus imperfect. Uses correct word order of all pronouns (including double object pronouns) and adverbs, such as *ya, todavía, aún.* Often shows remarkable fluency and ease of speech, but under tension or pressure language may break down.

Superior — Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics. Can discuss particular interests and special fields of competence with reasonable ease. Can support opinions, hypothesize, and conjecture. May not be able to tailor language to fit various audiences or discuss highly abstract topics in depth. Vocabulary is broad enough that speaker rarely has to grope for a word; good use of circumlocution. Pronunciation may still be obviously foreign. Control of grammar is good. Good control of preterite and imperfect (about 70% of the time); uses the present subjunctive appropriately most of the time and the imperfect subjective correctly about half the time. Can use all compound tenses, and can make simple contrary-to-fact statements. *Ser* and *estar* are almost completely controlled, as are reflexives and passive usages. Errors never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker.

Provisional Spanish Descriptions—Listening

Novice—Low — No practical understanding of spoken Spanish. Understanding is limited to cognates, borrowed words, high frequency social conventions, and occasional isolated words, such as *universidad, restaurante, gracias, taco, señor.* Essentially no ability to comprehend even short utterances.

Novice—Mid — Sufficient comprehension to understand some memorized words within predictable areas of need. Vocabulary for comprehension is limited to simple elementary needs, basic courtesy formulae and very simple memorized material relating to everyday objects and situations, such as *¿Qué tal? ¿Cómo te llamas?* or *¿Cómo se llama usted?* Utterances understood rarely exceed more than two or three words at a time, and ability to understand is characterized by long pauses for assimilation and by repeated requests on the listener's part for repetition, and/or a slower rate of speech. Confuses words that sound similar, such as *cosa/casa, hombre/hambre, pero/perro.*

Novice-High — Sufficient comprehension to understand a number of memorized utterances in areas of immediate need. Comprehends slightly longer utterances in situations where the context aids understanding, such as at the table, in a restaurant/store, in a train/bus. Phrases recognized have for the most part been memorized: *¿A qué hora sale el tren? ¿En qué le puedo servir? La mantequilla, por favor.* Comprehends vocabulary common to daily needs. Comprehends simple questions/statements about family members, age, address, weather, time, daily activities and interests: *¿Cuántos hermanos tiene usted? ¿Qué tiempo hace hoy?* Misunderstandings arise from failure to perceive critical sounds or endings. Understands even tailored speech with difficulty but gets some main ideas. Often requires repetition and/or a slowed rate of speed for comprehension, even when listening to persons such as teachers who are used to speaking with non-natives.

Intermediate—Low — Sufficient comprehension to understand utterances about basic survival needs, minimum courtesy and travel requirements. In areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics, can understand non-memorized material, such as simple questions and answers, statements, and face-to-face conversations in Spanish. Comprehension areas include basic needs: meals, lodging, transportation, time, simple instructions (e.g., route directions, such as *Siga derecho por tres kilómetros. Doble a la izquierda.*) and routine commands (e.g., from customs officials, police, such as *Pase por la aduana. Abra las maletas, por favor.*). Understands main ideas. Misunderstandings frequently arise from lack of vocabulary or from faulty processing of syntactic information often caused by strong interference from the native language or by the imperfect or partial acquisition of the target grammar.

Intermediate—Mid — Sufficient comprehension to understand simple conversations about some survival needs and some limited social conventions. Vocabulary permits understanding on topics beyond basic survival needs (e.g., personal history and leisure time activities), such as *¿Dónde nació usted? ¿Cuál es su pasatiempo favorito? ¿Qué piensa usted hacer este fin de semana?* Evidence of understanding basic constructions, e.g., subject-verb and noun-adjective agreement; some inflection is understood. Candidate's understanding of grammatical structure allows recognition of future and past references either by verb forms or by adverbs, adjectives, or prepositions of time (*pronto, mañana, ayer, el año pasado, antes, después*).

Intermediate—High — Sufficient comprehension to understand short conversations about most survival needs and limited social

conventions. Increasingly able to understand topics beyond immediate survival needs, such as biographical information in which both past and present/implied future tenses are used (*Yo vivía en el campo cuando era joven.*). Able to comprehend most sentences that feature familiar vocabulary and situations (home, office, school and daily activities; simple purchases; directions). Shows spontaneity in understanding, but speed and consistency of understanding uneven. Limited vocabulary range necessitates repetition for understanding. Understands commoner tense forms, including most question forms, but miscommunication still occurs with more complex patterns (*¿Qué te va a regalar tu novia?*). Can get the gist of conversations, but cannot sustain comprehension in longer utterances or in unfamiliar situations. Understanding of descriptions and detailed information is limited. Aware of basic cohesive features, e.g., pronouns, verb inflections, but many are unreliably understood, especially if other material intervenes (*La camisa que tiene el profesor no me parece muy bonita.*). Still has to ask for utterances to be repeated.

Advanced

Sufficient comprehension to understand conversations about routine social conventions and limited school or work requirements. Able to understand face-to-face speech in standard Spanish spoken at a normal rate, with some repetition and rewording, by a native speaker not used to dealing with foreigners. Able to get the gist of some radio broadcasts. Understands everyday topics, common personal and family news, well-known current events, and routine matters involving school or work; descriptions and narration about current, past and future events; the essential points of a discussion or speech at an elementary level on topics in special fields of interest. For example: *¿Quién ganó las últimas elecciones locales? El Secretario de Estado viajará a Chile mañana para asistir a una reunión con el presidente de ese pais; La clase media sufrirá el impacto de la inflación.*

Advanced Plus

Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social conventions, conversations on school or work requirements, and discussions on concrete topics related to particular interests and special fields of competence. Often shows remarkable ability and ease of understanding, but comprehension may break down under tension or pressure (including unfavorable listening conditions). May display weakness or deficiency due to inadequate vocabulary base or less-than-secure knowledge of grammar and syntax. May be deficient or uneven in completely comprehending conversations or discussions by educated native speakers due to a less-than-adequate knowledge of more complex syntactic structures (tense usage in simple and complex statements, passive voice constructions, relative clauses, word order, subject-object relationships). Still has some difficulty following radio broadcasts. Can sometimes detect emotional overtones. Increasing ability to understand between the lines (i.e., to make inferences).

Superior

Sufficient comprehension to understand the essentials of all speech in standard dialects, including technical discussions within a special field. Has sufficient understanding of face-to-face speech, delivered with normal clarity and speed in standard dialects on general topics and areas of special interest; understands hypothesizing and supported opinions. Has broad enough vocabulary that rarely has to ask for paraphrasing or explanation. Can follow accurately the essentials of conversations between educated native speakers, reasonably clear telephone calls, radio broadcasts, standard news items, oral reports, some oral technical reports, and public addresses on non-technical subjects. May not understand native speakers if they speak very quickly or use some slang or unfamiliar dialect. Can often detect emotional overtones. Can understand "between the lines" (i.e., make inferences).

Provisional Spanish Descriptions—Reading

Novice—Low

No functional ability in reading Spanish.

Novice—Mid

Sufficient understanding of written Spanish to interpret highly contextualized words or cognates within predictable areas. Vocabulary for comprehension limited to simple elementary needs, such as names, addresses, dates, signs indicating names of streets and avenues; building names (*hotel, farmacia, edificio*); short informative signs (*Prohibido Fumar, Entrada* and *Salida, Se Habla Inglés*) and signs with graphic explanations (*Damas* and *Caballeros* with drawings, *Una Vía* with arrow). Material understood rarely exceeds a single phrase and comprehension requires successive rereading and checking.

Novice—High

Sufficient comprehension of written language to interpret set expressions in areas of immediate need. Can recognize all letters of printed and written Spanish, including *ñ, rr, ll,* and is familiar with Spanish punctuation and diacritical marks (¿?, ¡!, ´, ¨). Where vocabulary has been mastered, can read for instructional and directional purposes standardized messages, phrases or expressions, such as some items on menus (*pollo, bistec, ensalada, té*), schedules, timetables, maps, signs indicating hours of operation (*Abierto de 9 a 12, Cerrado de 12 a 2*), social codes (*Mantenga Limpia Su Ciudad*), and street signs (*Alto, Ferrocarril,*

Hombres Trabajando). Vocabulary and grammar limited to the most common nouns, adjectives, question words, and a few verb forms. Material is read for essential information. Detail is overlooked or misunderstood.

Intermediate—Low

Sufficient comprehension to understand in printed form the simplest connected material, either authentic or specially prepared, dealing with basic survival or social needs. Able to understand both mastered material and recombinations of the mastered elements kept to the same level. Understands main ideas in material when structure and syntax parallel the native language. Can read brief messages in simple language, either typewritten or in very clear handwriting, such as telephone messages and personal notes about topics familiar to the reader. Recognizes written greetings and other social amenities common to notes and personal letters, such as greetings extended to the family, queries about the well-being of the addressee and family or friends, and expressions used in closings. Can interpret short, simple narratives containing the highest-frequency vocabulary and learned grammatical patterns. These include common verbs in the present tense, *hay/no hay*, many descriptive adjectives, common adverbs of time and manner, and memorized expressions referring to time, weather, etc. Misunderstandings arise often, when syntax diverges from that of the native language, when grammatical cues are overlooked or misinterpreted (e.g., tense and agreement markers or object pronouns), or when the style of handwriting is unfamiliar to the reader.

Intermediate—Mid

Sufficient comprehension to understand in printed form simple discourse for informative or social purposes. In response to perceived needs, can read public announcements to determine who, what, when, where, why, and how much information about such subjects as sporting events, concerts, parades, and celebrations. Can also identify products, prices, and some conditions of sale in popular, illustrated advertising for everyday items, such as food, clothing, work or school supplies, and travel. Can comprehend a note or letter in which a writer used to dealing with non-native readers describes self and family, ages, occupations, residence, personality traits, and common preferences when high frequency vocabulary or cognates are used. Understands general content of headlines in newspapers or article titles in popular magazines, such as *Semana, Hola,* [illegible] *Cambio 16,* if the content is familiar or of high interest. Understands facts and follows events in simple narration, authentic or specially prepared or edited when discourse consists of basic NP + VP + NP constructions. Can interpret negation, interrogation in various forms. Is fairly consistent in interpreting present time with present-tense verbs, future with *ir a* + infinitive, and past with basic regular and the eight to 10 most common irregular preterite-tense verbs, but still relies greatly on adverbs (*ayer, antes, después*) to verify relations of events in time. Has some difficulty with the cohesive factors in discourse, such as matching pronouns with referents and connecting ideas brought together by relative pronouns. Uses guessing strategies to interpret vocabulary consisting of regular cognate patterns, and highly contextualized items. May have to read several times before understanding.

Intermediate—High

Sufficient comprehension to understand a simple paragraph for personal communication, information or recreational purposes. Can read with understanding invitations, social notes, personal letters and some simple business letters on familiar topics. Can identify the main ideas in two to three short paragraphs of simple, non-technical narrative. Can identify main ideas from short items of general interest on familiar topics in popular magazines, such as *Semana, Hola, Activa,* in current familiar news items from major newspapers, and in other informational sources such as travel and publicity brochures. Can read for pleasure some uncomplicated authentic or edited prose and poetry and specially edited texts; material on Hispanic culture and civilization designed for the reader's linguistic level. Guesses at meaning when the context is clear, but relies heavily on a bilingual dictionary. Begins to use future and past (particularly preterite) verb endings to interpret time relations, and can recognize some cohesive factors such as object pronouns and simple clause connectors (*cuando, porque*). Understands statements and questions about likes and dislikes, although may be confused about tense or subject-object. Begins to relate sentences in the discourse to advance meaning, but cannot sustain understanding of longer discourse on unfamiliar topics. Misinterpretation still occurs with more complex patterns (longer sentences with subordinate constructions; reflexives and object pronouns; and most idiomatic expressions).

Advanced

Sufficient comprehension to read simple authentic printed material or edited textual material within a familiar context. Can read uncomplicated, authentic prose on familiar subjects (sports, travel, movies, theater, food, music, current events), news items in newspapers and popular magazines, biographical information in personal letters on family topics. Reads within the limits of identifiable vocabulary some unedited texts, such as prose fiction, from carefully chosen authors, usually contemporary. Such selections might appear in Sunday newspaper supplements, other daily papers, or special anthologies on modern culture. Sources include most major newspapers from Hispanic cities, popular magazines, and news magazines published for the general public (*Visión, Tiempo*). Misunderstandings may stem from lack of comprehension of the cultural or situational context, or from misinterpretation of grammatical clues that have been only partial-

ly assimilated to this point. Has some understanding of past time relations involving preterite vs. imperfect, but typically can recognize only limited present subjunctive meanings. Can follow essential points of written discussion at level of main ideas and some supporting ones with topics in a field of interest or where background exists, although will tend not to be able to draw inferences.

Advanced Plus

Sufficient comprehension to understand most factual information in non-technical prose as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to special interests. Able to read for information and description, to follow sequence of events, and to react to information read. Can separate main ideas from lesser ones and use that division to advance understanding. In major newspapers and magazines, can read international items and social and cultural news. Understanding of specialized items depends upon individual interests and background, at this level can read material in own areas of interest. Within literary fields of interest, can read non-esoteric prose, including critical articles and books. Can read signs, posters, advertisements, and public announcements. Can follow simple printed directions for cooking and other projects within areas of expertise. Guesses logically at new words by using linguistic and non-linguistic contexts and prior knowledge. Is able to comprehend most high-frequency idiomatic expressions, but will still have difficulty with figurative meanings. Can correctly interpret most indicators of time relations, including indicative verb endings, adverbial expressions (*antes de que, después de que, luego*) and expressions with *hacer*. Has a good understanding of meanings expressed by the present subjunctive, and is able to interpret imperfect subjunctive part of the time (e.g., with impersonal expressions such as *era necesario que,* or expressions of volition or emotion such as *quisiera que* or *sentía que*). May react personally to the material but does not yet detect subjective attitudes, values, or judgments reflected in the style of writing.

Superior

Able to read standard newspaper items addressed to the general reader, routine correspondence,reports and technical material in a field of interest at a normal rate of speed (at least 220 WPM). Can gain new knowledge from material in a variety of publications on a wide range of unfamiliar topics related to fields of interest. Can interpret hypotheses, supported opinions, and documented facts, as well as figurative devices, stylistic differences, and humor. Can read most literary genres in the original: novels, essays, poetry, short stories, and most literature written for the general public. Reading ability is not subject dependent. Broad general vocabulary, knowledge of most structures, and development of strategies for logical guessing allow for successful interpretation of unfamiliar words, idioms, or structures. Verb tenses and moods have been largely mastered, including irregular uses of past subjunctive and conditional. Able to achieve overall comprehension of material, even though there may be some gaps in detail. Is generally able to comprehend facts, although misinterpretation may still occur. Can draw inferences, but may be unable to appreciate nuances or stylistics.

Provisional Spanish Descriptions—Writing

Novice—Low

No functional ability in writing Spanish.

Novice—Mid

No practical communicative writing skills. Able to copy isolated words and short phrases. Able to transcribe previously studied words or phrases. Able to write name, address, dates and other numbers, as well as common expressions such as those used in greetings and leave-takings.

Novice—High

Able to write simple fixed expressions and limited memorized material. Can supply information when requested on forms such as hotel registers and travel documents. Can write names, write out numbers from 1-20, dates (days of the week, months of the year), own nationality as well as other common adjectives of nationality, addresses, and other simple biographical information. Can write limited learned vocabulary for common objects, short phrases, and simple lists. Can write such expressions as *Buenos días; Yo me llamo* plus name; *¿Cómo está usted?* and other fixed social formulae. Can name some common objects; knows some common adjectives and adverbs; can use the present tense of some common verbs, and can write interrogative sentences with words such as *dónde, cómo, por qué, cuando.* Can write all the letters and unique punctuation and diacritical marks in Spanish. Able to write simple, memorized material, with frequent misspellings. Some sound/letter combinations transfer negatively, such as **qua-* or **quà-* for *cua-* or *cuo-*, and consonants are often doubled or miswritten especially in cognate words such as **classe, *nation.* Accent marks are frequently missed, especially when one word of a pair has an accent mark and the other one does not, e.g., *lección/lecciones, joven/jóvenes.* Sometimes uses infinitives for conjugated verbs. Has a concept of gender, and can produce definite and indefinite articles, though often inappropriately. Often forgets to make adjectives agree with nouns. Generally cannot create own sentences in the language, but uses memorized material or transformations of familiar patterns.

*Denotes an error characteristic of speakers at this level.

Intermediate—Low Has sufficient control of the writing system to meet limited practical needs. Can write short messages, such as simple questions or notes, postcards, phone messages, and the like. Can take simple notes on material dealing with very familiar topics within the scope of limited language experience. Material produced consists of recombinations of learned vocabulary and structures into simple sentences. Can express present and future by using the present tense and adverbs of time such as *mañana, esta noche, la semana próxima, el año próximo.* For example: *Tengo un examen mañana; Yo voy a Caracas la semana próxima.* Generally cannot express past time by past tenses, but may incorrectly use the present tense and an adverb of time such as *ayer, la noche pasada, esta mañana* to convey past meaning. Uses sporadically forms such as possessive adjectives, demonstrative and interrogative adjectives, and partitive articles, but not always correctly. Vocabulary is limited to common objects and cognates, and is inadequate to express anything but elementary needs. Can express numbers from 1-100 with some misspellings. Often inserts native-language vocabulary for unknown words, and is generally not capable of circumlocution to get meaning across. Writing tends to be a loose collection of sentences or sentence fragments on very familiar topics (likes and dislikes, general routine, everyday events or situations). Makes continual errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation, but writing can be read and understood by a native reader used to dealing with foreigners. Able to produce appropriately some fundamental sociolinguistic distinctions in formal and familiar style, such as appropriate subject pronouns, titles of address and basic social formulae.

Intermediate—Mid Sufficient control of writing system to meet some survival needs and some limited social demands. Able to compose short paragraphs or take notes on familiar topics grounded in personal experience. Can discuss likes and dislikes, daily routine, everyday events, and the like. Can use correctly the present tense of most regular verbs and some iregular verbs. Can use *ir a* plus infinitive to express future time. Can express past time using content words and time expressions, with sporadically accurate verbs. Generally good control of basic constructions and inflections, such as subject-verb agreement, and straightforward syntactic constructions in present or future time, but may make errors where related forms are separated in a sentence, e.g., **Mi mamá no es muy alto.* May make frequent errors when venturing beyond current level of linguistic competence (such as when expressing opinions or emotions, where non-memorized conditionals, subjunctives, and other advanced concepts of grammar may come into play.) When resorting to a dictionary, often is unable to identify appropriate vocabulary, or uses dictionary entry in uninflected form.

*Denotes an error characteristic of speakers at this level.

Intermediate—High Sufficient control of writing system to meet most survival needs and limited social demands. Can take notes in some detail on familiar topics (autobiographical information, preferences, daily routine, simple descriptions and narration of everyday events and situations) and respond to personal questions using elementary vocabulary and common structures. Can write simple letters, brief synopses and paraphrases, summaries of biographical data and work experience, and short compositions on familiar topics. Can create sentences and short paragraphs relating to most survival needs (food, lodging, transportation, immediate surroundings and situations) and limited social demands. Can express fairly accurately present and future time. Produces some past verb forms, but not always accurately or with correct usage. Shows good control of elementary vocabulary and some control of basic syntactic patterns, but major errors still occur when expressing more complex thoughts. Dictionary usage may still yield incorrect vocabulary to express simple ideas. Generally does not use basic cohesive elements of discourse to advantage (relative constructions, pronouns, connectors, and the like). Writing, though faulty, is comprehensible to native speakers used to reading Spanish written by non-natives. Is able to express a few thoughts for which vocabulary is unknown via circumlocution, but may insert native-language syntactic patterns when expressing ideas beyond current level of linguistic competence.

Advanced Able to write routine social correspondence and simple discourse of at least several paragraphs on familiar topics. Can write simple social correspondence, take notes and write cohesive summaries, resumés, and short narratives and descriptions on factual topics in the past, present, and future time. Able to write about everyday topics using both description and narration. Has sufficient vocabulary to write simple statements with some circumlocution. Can write about a limited number of current events of daily situations and can express personal preferences and observations in some detail using basic structures. Is able to recycle new but meaningful phrases whether lexical or structural, i.e., lifts phrases appropriately, writing appears more sophisticated. When writing own thoughts, is more likely to paraphrase according to native language at times. Still makes errors in spelling and accent marks, but controls the most common formats and punctuation conventions. Good control of noun, adjective, and verb morphology, and of the most frequently used syntactic structures. Elementary constructions are usually handled quite accurately, and

writing is understandable to a native speaker not used to reading Spanish written by non-natives. Uses a limited number of cohesive devices such as direct-object pronouns, and can delete redundant words with good accuracy. Has difficulty with indirect object constructions, however, typically treating the *a*-phrase as obligatory and the indirect-object pronoun as optional (**Siempre doy regalos a mi novio.*) Uses verbs like *gustar, importar, faltar,* and *quedar* in certain fixed formulae, but without confidence or flexibility, and frequently follows English patterns: **Yo falto veinte dolares.* Able to join sentences in limited discourse, but has difficulty and makes frequent errors in producing complex sentences. Paragraphs are reasonably unified and coherent.

*Denotes an error characteristic of speakers at this level.

Advanced Plus

Shows ability to write about most common topics with some precision and in some detail. Can write fairly detailed resumés and summaries and take accurate notes. Can write most social and informal business correspondence. Can describe and narrate personal experiences and explain simply points of view in prose discourse using simple and compound verb tenses. Can write about concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Normally controls general vocabulary with some circumlocution. Often shows remarkable fluency and ease of expression, but under time constraints (e.g., no opportunity to rewrite), and pressure (e.g., testing), language may be inaccurate and/or incomprehensible. Generally strong in either grammar or vocabulary, but rarely in both. Weaknesses and unevenness in one of the foregoing or in spelling result in occasional miscommunication. Areas of weakness range sporadically from simple constructions, such as articles, prepositions, negatives and agreement, to more complex structures, such as tense usage (especially preterite and imperfect), passive or impersonal constructions, word order, relative clauses, and basic subjunctive constructions. Preterite vs. imperfect errors are especially likely with *haber* and *ser,* and when an arguably "ongoing" or "habitual" activity is circumscribed in time: *Estuvimos bailando toda la noche; Fui a la playa todos los días durante el mes que estuvimos allí.* Some misuse of vocabulary still evident, especially when using dictionary for words with multiple meanings or where related words carry various functions, but does use a dictionary to advantage where a fairly direct bilingual translation and no intralingual ambiguity exist. Shows ability to use circumlocution. Writing is understandable to native speakers not used to reading material written by non-natives, though the style is still obviously foreign.

Superior

Able to use written Spanish effectively in most formal and informal exchanges on practical, social, and professional topics. Can write most types of correspondence, such as memos, social and business letters (with appropriate formulaic introductions and closings), short research papers, and statements of position. Can express hypotheses and conjectures, and present arguments or points of view accurately and effectively. Can write about areas of special interest and handle topics in special fields. Has good control of a full range of structures so that time, description and narration can be used to expand upon ideas. Errors in basic structures are sporadic and not indicative of communicative control. In addition to simple tenses, can use compound tenses to show time relationships among events to express ideas clearly and coherently, but errors are sometimes made when using complex structures, such as indefinite, relative, or demonstrative pronouns when a range of tenses is necessary within a relatively short discourse. These errors are occasional and rarely disturb the native speaker. Has a wide enough vocabulary to convey the message accurately, though style may be foreign. Uses dictionary with a high degree of accuracy to supplement specialized vocabulary or to improve content or style. Although sensitive to differences in formal and informal style, still may not tailor writing precisely or accurately to a variety of audiences (except for personal vs. business correspondence) or styles.

Provisional Spanish Descriptions—Culture

Novice

Limited interaction. Behaves with considerateness. Is resourceful in nonverbal communication, but does not reliably interpret gestures or culturally specific nonverbal behavior, such as physical contacts with greetings, proximity of speaker. Is limited in language (see listening/speaking guidelines), but may be able to manage short phrases of courtesy (*gracias, con mucho gusto, de nada*) and basic titles of respect (*señor, señora, señorita*). Lacks generally the knowledge of culture patterns requisite for survival situations.

Intermediate

Survival competence. Can deal with familiar survival situations and interact with a culture bearer accustomed to foreigners. Is able to use conventional phrases when being introduced, such as *mucho gusto, el gusto es mío* as well as proper greetings at different times of day or night: *Buenas tardes* (more extensive period of time, until sunset); *Buenas noches* (both greeting and leave-taking); *Hola* (limited to informal occasions among friends). Can provide background information, such as personal address (street followed by number: *Calle Norte #30*), and telephone number (grouping in pairs: 32-49-63). Is able to express wants in simple

situations: *Quiero un cuarto con baño; Quiero una coca-cola, por favor; Quiero un sello* (or *una estampilla*) *para México.* Is able to ask directions: *¿Dónde queda* (or *está) el banco? (hotel, correo, parque, estación de policía,* etc.). Understands the need to go to different specialty shops to buy foods: *carne* in the *carnicería, pan* at the *panadería, pescado* at the *pescadería, dulces* at the *dulcería, frutas* at the *frutería,* etc. Is aware of the use of the metric system and knows simple phrases, such as *Quiero cien gramas de queso.* Is aware of different meal schedules as well as the content of each meal. Breakfast: light, consisting of bread, milk and coffee in most cases; Lunch: heavy; Dinner: generally very late. Knows that public transportation has different structure or organization according to country, such as buses with a *conductor* (driver) and a *cobrador* (ticket collector). Comprehends responses: *El banco está a dos cuadras; El correo queda a la izquierda del Hotel Nacional; Cuesta tres pesos; El hotel está lleno; No tenemos habitaciones (cuartos) disponibles,* etc. Is generally aware that tips are expected in restaurants, hotels, theaters, and other service situations. Yet may make errors as the result of misunderstanding or misapplying assumptions about the culture, such as not tipping a gas station attendant or arriving too early for dinner.

Advanced

Limited social competence. Handles routine situations successfully with a culture bearer accustomed to foreigners. Though home culture predominates, shows comprehension of common rules of etiquette, such as use of *tú* and *usted* and titles of respect, the importance of dressing according to the occasion in a more formal society, taboos and never asking private questions about age, salary and family affairs. Also shows comprehension of guest etiquette, such as complimenting hosts on food and wine, keeping both hands on the table when dining, holding the knife in the right hand, understanding that the kitchen is "off-limits" unless invited, not leaving immediately after dinner, and offering food or cigarettes to others before taking them oneself. Knows uses of *con permiso* vs. *perdón* as well as uses of *gusta* and *buen provecho* as common phrases of courtesy. Can make polite requests using commands or first person of *querer* with polite intonation and/or followed by *por favor* for requests. *Deme un formulario, por favor. Quiero un pasaje de ida y vuelta.* Knows conventional phrases for accepting invitations (*Encantado(a), accepto con mucho gusto, es un placer para mí cenar con su familia)* or refusing them (*gracias,* or *muchas gracias, se lo agradezco mucho, pero tengo otro compromiso* or *tengo que estudiar/trabajar,* etc.). Is aware of the use of gifts as an expression of friendship, personal esteem or gratitude. Knows how to accept gifts graciously. Knows how to apologize, using phrases such as: *lo siento mucho, no fue mi intención molestarle, perdóneme,* or *usted perdone, lamento lo sucedido,* etc. Is aware of Hispanics' reluctance to apologize. Can make introductions in formal and informal situations. Knows how to answer the telephone: *diga, bueno, aló, sí. Juan no está; ¿quiere dejarle algún recado? ¿Quién lo llama, por favor?* Knows how to place a call and ask for a third party: *Habla Jack Smith, ¿está Pedro?* or *Buenas tardes, ¿puedo hablar con Pedro Fernández?* or leave a message: *Hágame el favor de decirle que Jack Smith lo llamó.* Is able to do routine banking: *Deseo abrir una cuenta corriente* (or *de ahorros*); *Quiero depositar $1,300; Necesito comprar 20 cheques de viajero de $100 (cada uno); Necesito cambiar este cheque personal; Quiero sacar $60 de mi cuenta de ahorros; Quiero enviar un giro bancario al Perú.* Knows how to handle routine business at the post office: *Deme 10 sellos aéreos, por favor; Deseo enviar un giro postal de $50 a México; ¿Cuánto es el franqueo de una tarjeta postal a Bolivia?* Is able to make purchases in a small or large store: *¿Dónde queda el departamento de ropa interior (de caballeros, de niños, etc.)? Deseo una camisa deportiva de rayón, talla 34* or *talla mediana; ¿Cuál es el precio? ¿Cuánto cuesta? ¿Qué precio tiene? ¿Está rebajado hoy?* Can identify products, prices (in local currency), and conditions of promotional sales. Understands that bargaining is limited to small markets and street vendors and knows how to bargain: *Es muy caro...le ofrezco 40 pesos; No puedo pagarle más de 300 pesetas.* Still makes errors in the use of *tú* and *usted.* Is not competent to take part in a formal meeting or in a group where several persons are speaking informally at the same time.

Superior

Working social and professional competence. Can participate in almost all social situations and those within one vocation. Handles unfamiliar situations with ease and sensitivity, including some involving common taboos, or some that are otherwise emotionally charged. Comprehends most nonverbal responses. Laughs at some culture-related humor, such as imitation of substandard speech, plays on words, etc. In productive skills, neither culture predominates; nevertheless, makes appropriate use of cultural references and expressions, such as colloquial phrases (*¡Dios te libre!*), idiomatic phrases (*en puntillas*), or sayings (*alegre como unas Pascusas; loco como una cabra*). Generally distinguishes between formal and informal register (i.e., correct use of formal *usted* vs. informal *tú*) and proper use of titles of respect. Discusses abstract ideas relating the foreign and native cultures and is aware cognitively of areas of difference, i.e., the importance of family ties (extended family), the attitude toward animals, the influence of the military in political affairs, the influence of the church vs. the long tradition of anticlericalism among men, especially in Latin America. Can discuss current events as well as fields of personal interest and support opinions. Is generally limited, however, in handling abstractions. Would know that Hispanic persons might criticize their own country, but would not accept such criticism from foreigners.

Near-Native Competence	Full social and professional competence. Has internalized the concept that culture is relative and is always on the lookout to do the appropriate thing; no longer assumes that own culture is "the way it is." Fits behavior to audience, and Hispanic culture dominates almost entirely when using the language. Can counsel, persuade, negotiate, represent a point of view, describe and compare features of the native and target cultures. In such comparisons, can discuss geography, history, institutions, customs and behavior patterns, current events and national policies. Perceives almost all unverbalized responses (gestures, emotional reactions) and recognizes almost all allusions, including historical (*Es un Trujillo más en el Caribe.*) and literary commonplaces pertaining to a particular country (*Nos encontramos con otro Tirano Banderas.*). Laughs at most culture-related humor, such as imitation of regional or ethnic speech patterns and allusions to political or comic strip figures. Uses low frequency idiomatic expressions (*apañados estamos*), sayings (*más pobre que una rata de sacristía*) or proverbs (*La gota de agua horada la piedra.*). Controls formal and informal register. Has lived in the culture for a long time or has studied it extensively. Is inferior to the culture bearer only in background information related to the culture such as childhood experiences, detailed regional geography and past events of significance.
Native Competence	Native competence. Examinee is indistinguishable from a person brought up and educated in the culture.